

Guy Barnett MP

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Tasmanian Government **Media Release**

Guy Barnett, Minister for Health

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Enhancing access to primary care for those experiencing homelessness

Tasmanians experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness will now have access to more after-hours health care after two health providers received grants under the Rockliff Liberal Government's GP After Hours Initiative.

The \$8 million initiative aims to strengthen community-based services, with previous funding rounds enabling general practices and pharmacies to deliver urgent care and reduce pressure on our hospitals.

Minister for Health, Guy Barnett, said the Government was delivering what matters for all Tasmanians including improved access to health services.

"The round four grants of up to \$250,000 were targeted towards supporting vulnerable Tasmanians who may find it particularly difficult to access a GP," Minister Barnett said.

The successful recipients are:

- Launceston City Mission who will expand its Mission Health Service. This service has been operating on a nurse-led volunteer basis since March 2019 and will expand from a three hour per week service to four full days per week. The service also seeks to broaden the type of primary health care available to those experiencing, or at risk of experiencing homelessness; and
- Moreton Group Medical Services is seeking to build on its successful after-hours, Nurse Practitioner or GP-led mobile clinic model. The funding will enable the provision of care in the greater Hobart area, within business hours, in a safe and familiar setting by bringing primary health care to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. The service will build on existing partnerships with community support organisations and crisis accommodation providers.

Minister Barnett said the Federal Government is predominantly responsible for funding GPs and primary care, however the Tasmanian Government is taking action to fill in the gaps by investing in a number of community-based care initiatives.

"The GP After Hours Initiative is part of our commitment to providing all Tasmanians with the right care, in the right place, at the right time," Minister Barnett said.

“This round of funding has a particular focus on supporting Tasmanians currently experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness, and we are pleased this program will better support these Tasmanians to access health care.

“These programs will expand access to primary care services in the communities in which people live, providing patients with safe and accessible care, while helping reduce demand on our public hospitals.”