

CONSTITUENT QUESTION

House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Ella Haddad MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Jacquie Petrusma MP
Minister for Health

QUESTION:

My question is on behalf of my constituent who cares for his wife who has Parkinson's disease. He is concerned that in the latest Parkinson's Tasmania Journal it was reported that there would be a reduction in staffing of the Parkinson's Unit. He says the nurses there have been and are an essential part of his wife's support, and that, as her carer, he has also benefited from their expertise and care. He wants to know why essential services such as these are being cut and why the government is resorting to accepting funding from a volunteer organisation to maintain their own workforce?

ANSWER:

I am advised by the Tasmanian Health Service (THS) Hospitals South that there has been no reduction in funding or staffing within the Parkinson's Unit at Hospitals South.

There has been recent recruitment of nursing staff to fill vacant positions where previous staff have accepted other nursing positions within the THS.

There are currently 2.3 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) nursing positions in the South, of which 2.1 FTE is permanently filled. The other 0.2 FTE is vacant and will be advertised.

I am further advised that an offer of funding for an additional 0.5 FTE nursing position was made by Parkinson's Tasmania in December 2024 to boost support to people living with Parkinson's in the community. However, this has not been finalised.

In response to the increasing number of people living with Parkinson's in the community, the management of the Parkinson's Unit and other support services within the THS are reviewing the support offered in the community to ensure that people living with Parkinson's are receiving services in a timely manner in the most appropriate setting of care.

Services include those delivered by primary providers such as General Practitioners, specialist medical staff, and allied health and nursing staff in both outpatient settings and community visits.

The Subacute Aged and Community Services stream within the THS are reviewing their model of care so that support for Parkinson's patients in the community is strengthened and enhanced. They will be working closely with Parkinson's Tasmania to ensure that any funding that has been offered to the THS will be utilised to support these patients in the best way possible. This may be in the form of additional nursing or allied health support for a fixed period, if the review considers that this is necessary.

APPROVED/NOT APPROVED



Hon Jacquie Petrusma MP
Minister for Health

Date: 31/3/25