



Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network

Joint Select Committee on Preventative Health Care

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments and ideas to the Joint Select Committee on Preventative Health Care.

The Social Determinants of Health Action Network (SDoHAN) made a submission in March 2013 to the Joint Select Committee established under the previous Tasmanian Government. As our views are a-political and our evidence continues to hold true, we wish to re-submit this paper. We also attach a newly released statement from SDoHAN calling on the Government to:

- Prioritise the early years
- Implement a Health in All Policies approach
- Direct resources into an intersectoral unit to reduce poverty in Tasmania
- Mandate training for health workers on social determinants of health and health literacy
- Implement a 'social determinants – pull model' in health care.

Since SDoHAN's 2013 submission was forwarded to the Committee, Miriam Vandenberg (Herzfeld) from SDoHAN and a range of other people with expertise in this area appeared before the previous Select Committee on Preventative Health Care and presented an extensive range of knowledge and ideas. We urge members of the new Committee to re-visit transcripts of these hearings as well as the original submissions.

The Network continues to be concerned about the Tasmanian Government's lack of a long term vision for health care planning in Tasmania and its failure to integrate a social determinants of health approach. Its recent One Health System Green Paper is limited to clinical care and makes no mention of prevention. Budget cuts within the public service are seeing areas of DHHS that focussed on health promotion, prevention and early intervention, and reducing population health inequities being cut, while the emphasis on front line services is maintained. Cuts to education funding and social support initiatives are eroding the social fabric essential to good health and wellbeing. The Network considers that the abolition of the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation would result in further disintegration of this social fabric.

We believe the need to intervene early and create optimal conditions for good health, thereby reducing future cost blowouts to frontline services, is only common sense – as well as good economic practice. There is enough expertise in Tasmania to achieve this broader vision.

The Network applauds the Committee in seeking a way forward that encompasses a preventative approach. We believe that this work is essential and have high hopes that it will be well-integrated and prioritised within future health care planning, as well as across other relevant areas of government business.

The Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network endorses the submission prepared by the Tasmanian Council of Social Service (TasCOSS).

Attachments:

- Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network, 2015, *Supporting Tasmanians to be the healthiest population in Australia by 2025* (SDoHAN Key Messages 2015).
- Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network, 2013, *Submission to Joint Select Committee Preventative Health Care Inquiry*.

This submission was prepared on behalf of members of the Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network, Tasmania by:

- Morven Andrews
- Rebecca Essex
- Miriam Vandenberg (Herzfeld)

The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors.

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For further information please contact:

Convenor, Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network (Tasmania)

☎ 0400 480 908

✉ miriam_herzfeld@internode.on.net

📮 PO Box 23, Margate, Tasmania 7000