

**From:** [Zainab Clark](#)  
**To:** [PAC](#)  
**Cc:** [Rebecca White MP](#)  
**Subject:** Stadium while our teeth fall out  
**Date:** Monday, 16 January 2023 4:07:34 PM

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To whom it may concern,

When Hon. Bill Shorten was the leader of Labor, he and Tanya campaigned to make real improvements in health and dental care (even offering \$1000 of dental care for Pensioners and Health Care Card Holders) and we celebrated the heart and logic in that campaign. God willing those initiatives will be brought in.

We were distressed to hear that our Premier of Tasmania has convinced the Prime Minister that the \$750 + million AFL stadium is a good idea here. (With escalated building costs it will, in reality, probably be more like \$1Billion.) It is likely that from the top of the stadium, if built, you could send a drone up on a short flight and be able to see all the homeless families living in tents in the showground. I wonder how those people will feel as they listen to the distant cheers of the football supporters. Forgotten perhaps?? Discarded, 'worth less' than a game of football?

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/jul/03/a-bitter-winter-and-nowhere-else-to-go-hobart-housing-crisis-forcing-people-to-live-in-tents>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-07-12/housing-meeting-crisis-tasmania-tents-showgrounds/101227626>

Not only do we have the worst homelessness numbers ever known in our state, the nation's worst waiting times for hospital care but even our teeth may fall out waiting three years on the public dental maintenance waiting list. Just this week I rang to ask for an appointment as I have a compromised tooth (cracked I think). I was told I still had another year on the waiting list but could ring back if it became really painful. It is well known that even gum disease can lead to heart disease. One would think that the cost to the community of heart disease would be incentive enough to help maintain people's teeth and gums.

I know it isn't a life-threatening and serious condition but I have been waiting almost a year just to see a specialist at RHH for painful carpal tunnel in both hands. Last week I rang to see if I had accidentally been dropped from the list but was told that I still had another 100+ days before getting near the top. They had received the referral in February. I have had a doctor tell me that from referral to final elective surgery in Tasmania, can take up to seven years! Even when big dollars have been thrown at hospital buildings, staff numbers and beds have been cut to bare basics and facilities stand idle. The Hand Clinic, in Argyle St for example, has facilities for about half a dozen specialist physiotherapists... but they don't employ them. So most of the consultation facilities aren't in use. The lovely large room stands mostly vacant with no one using most of the desks. The wait to see a Hand Physiotherapist is at least a year.

The Mercury has reported that in Tasmania people may die waiting for Chemotherapy and Radiation treatment, for lack of staff.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-10-27/cancer-treatment-equipment-to-lie-idle-due-to-lack-of-staff/101578278>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-01-26/tasmanian-family-caught-up-in-states-elective-surgery-wait/100781672>

One of the worst and most impactful realities, is that Tasmania is treated as another country when it comes to wages. Where housing prices have rocketed and living expenses have exploded, still our workers remain the lowest paid in Australia and the Tasmanian government has done nothing to alleviate this situation. Where is the justification for having a much lower award wage for one state than for any other? Our brightest and youngest leave the state because, in a similar position in another state they could be earning up to twice as much money. Why are Australian states not on the same footing when it comes to wages and people doing exactly the same job? Historically, the justification for keeping wages lower in Tasmania was due to cheap housing. That is absolutely not the case any longer and people are losing their homes due to inability to pay rent or mortgages, if they are lucky enough to find a home to live in. When 40+ people apply for every rental and ensure a bidding war and houses are snapped up by overseas investors to be turned into Airbnb's, what hope do locals have? The situation is beyond dire and our young people have little or no hope of a secure home now or in the future. There must be a limit put on approvals for good useable housing being turned into short-term accommodation. Communities are really hurting. Families and children are suffering.

Please do all you can to remedy this! If you really think a Stadium is what we need then at least match it with Health, Housing and Education investment in Tasmania. In twenty years our population has exploded from 400,000 to over 600,000 with little or no increase in services or infrastructure. Our grand-daughter's primary school in South Hobart had to close their library and music room to fit more students into over-crowded classrooms.

We are almost at a standstill, or even going backwards. Tasmania is quickly becoming a third world state of our country.

Yours most sincerely

Zainab Clark