

From: [Rod and Vick](#)
To: [transferofcare](#)
Subject: Ambulance wait times
Date: Wednesday, 27 September 2023 12:35:56 PM

Dear Inquiry Board members,

I am emailing to share an incident which occurred earlier this year, which caused distress and much concern for all involved in waiting for an ambulance in an emergency situation.

In February this year 2023, my 87 year old, female neighbour had a serious fall down her back steps which resulted in her lying and being trapped on top of her walking frame and crying for help.

Upon hearing her cries in pain and need for assistance, i climbed over our fence and ran to assist her. I asked my wife to call for more help and get our other neighbours to assist, which they did.

An ambulance was rang for, via the 000 emergency services at about 6pm. An ambulance was "booked" and the male operator gave us directions to stabilize the elderly lady until help arrived.

After about 45 minutes the lady was naturally getting very cold and more in pain. We comforted her and supported her head as directed which 2 of us took turns in doing. We placed several blankets on her and tried to reassure her.

After an hour...no ambulance. We were getting very annoyed and tired and the patient was suffering even more ! We redialed 000 and was told that our ambulance was in the queue and the next available would be sent. No ambulances were available in the Launceston area at that time as all were on call-outs or at the LGH !

After another 30 minutes it was too much. We redialed 000 very annoyed, and said the lady was in shock and we needed to get her up somehow and get her to hospital as her head was bleeding badly from the fall and she was very cold.

We were told an ambulance was dispatched and on its way...

About 20 minutes later (Nearly 2 hours from the initial call to 000) an ambulance arrived with 1 driver only ! She was from the Georgetown Station and was awaiting backup ! She assessed the lady and reassured her she would be ok.

We were in disbelief. The second ambulance and single driver arrived about 10 minutes later..... from Deloraine ! They said that both Deloraine and Georgetown were then without ambulances due to attending our patient in Launceston!

The lady was assisted and treated with the very best of care and respect. She was loaded carefully into one of the ambulances and taken to the LGH most likely to be ramped until she could be admitted.

After talking to her about 2 weeks later when home, she said the care was absolutely fantastic, but she was kept in the ambulance at the waiting bay for about another 2 hours until the ED could see her.

This type of case is not isolated or uncommon. Our Ambos are doing an incredible job under lots of stress and pressures, however the resources and the ability to take our most

vulnerable at times of need, is simply not there !

A drive past the LGH on many days will see the ambulance bay full and 2 or 3 ambulances parked in Charles St because they cannot get in.

Until the **WHOLE** Health care system, from Federal Govt to State Govt level, from Medicare to local GP, from Emergency care units to Hospital EDs is "totally overhauled" to better meet the needs of our sick and injured, this type of incident will continue and people **WILL** die waiting.

By this I mean: Medical emergency and out of hours/ business hours GP treatment is expensive and many in our Community cannot afford it. As a result, most are going to Medicare Public funded treatment facilities: LGH and RHH EDs and thus "clogging the system".

People cannot afford GP visits these days, so we go to our Public Hospital and wait for a doctor to see you. Until the huge out of pocket or initial up front costs are addressed, the resultant issue of ramping and clogged EDs will continue.

Rodney Jones.