

CONSTITUENT QUESTION

House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Cecily Rosol MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Bridget Archer MP
Minister for Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing

QUESTION:

My question is on behalf of a constituent who has been diagnosed with stage 4 terminal cancer. They have been able to access treatment at the Clinical Trials Unit in Hobart, something they describe as a lifeline that has given them hope when there was none. They ask why this hope is being threatened by Department of Health decisions that have seen trials withdrawn and the threat of staff cuts? Why must they now, when they are so unwell, have to consider travelling to the mainland to access groundbreaking trials that could save their life, when these trials have been and could keep being offered in Tasmania?

ANSWER:

- Clinical trials are an incredibly important part of our health system, and I fully understand and appreciate the great work that staff do in supporting them.
- Clinical trials support research and innovation to find new or alternative forms of treatment and are funded for the duration of the clinical trial period.
- The Cancer Trials Unit (CTU) offers cutting edge treatment options for patients with cancer, often where no standard care exists.

- I understand the proposed changes are seeking to ensure staffing levels in the unit can be matched to meet demand, guided by the number of clinical trials underway.
- The intention is for nursing staff to be redeployed into vacant roles, retaining Clinical Trial Unit expertise within the Tasmanian Health Service.
- This is consistent with comparable units interstate and is designed to flex up and down according to trial activity.
- CTU continues to operate as normal with a total of 783 patients being seen. As at 30 October 2025 there were 31 new trials open to recruitment, and 34 closed trials with patients still being studied.
- Further, I understand the Department is also looking at bringing more trials on board to support future growth and trial expansion.
- In regards to the concerns raised by your constituent, I am happy to look into their specific circumstances and ask for their contact details to be provided to my office, if they are comfortable for us to do so.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bridget Archer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Bridget" on the top line and "Archer" on the bottom line.

Hon Bridget Archer MP
Minister for Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing

Date:

02 DEC 2025