CONSTITUENT QUESTION

House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Helen Burnet MP

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

QUESTION:

My question is from a constituent in Claremont who recently contacted my office regarding the unacceptable wait times to see a public specialist gynaecologist in southern Tasmania. She says: Women in our community are waiting up to a year, or even longer, for basic non-urgent public gynaecological care, while jurisdictions like the Australian Capital Territory maintain far greater specialist availability and shorter waitlists. Essential healthcare should not depend on your post code. What immediate, concrete steps is the Government taking to recruit public gynaecologists to the Royal Hobart Hospital to ensure women in Claremont can access timely bulk billed specialist care?

ANSWER:

The Department of Health is committed to ensuring Tasmanian women receive safe, timely, and high-quality care.

In recent years, there have been improvements in access to gynaecology services.

In 2025-26, gynaecology outpatient clinics across Tasmania delivered 19,238 appointments, which included first attendances for 5,139 newly referred patients who were seen and removed from the waiting list. This was more attendances than the figure recorded for 2024-25 (19,016) and substantially more than 2023-24 (16,334).

The proportion of newly referred gynaecology outpatients who were seen within the clinically recommended timeframe in Tasmania has increased in recent years from 56.2 per cent in 2023-24 to 84 per cent in 2025-26 (88.5 per cent for patients in the Claremont area).

Regarding workforce, most recent official National Health Workforce Data Set (2024) records indicate that Tasmania had a total headcount of 51 obstetricians and gynaecologists (58.0 FTE) across the public and private sectors in 2022, representing a 26 per cent FTE change over the preceding five-year period.

On a per-capita basis, this workforce in Tasmania is 10.1 FTE per 100,000 population, compared to the national average of 8.4 FTE per 100,000.

Addressing geographic disparity is a priority under the Department's workforce strategies. In 2024, the South recorded 11.3 FTE, the North recorded 8.8 FTE, and the North West also recorded 8.8 FTE per 100,000 population. However, it should be noted that each region requires a distinct workforce composition to meet local clinical service needs.

Through the Health Workforce Sustainability Strategy and Plan 2025-2030, the Department is actively pursuing targeted recruitment, rural and regional training pathways in partnership with RANZCOG, and retention incentives to ensure appropriate medical specialists are equitably distributed across all three regions.

Bridget Archer

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

Date: 10/10/26