

# Mental Wellness: A Path to Recovery

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**Mental health services must be integrated, and community healing hubs created, so people in distress always know their pathway to recovery and have a caring place to go.**

60,000 Tasmanians live in mental health distress each year. They suffer personal distress, with social and financial impacts for themselves, their families and communities.

Without the right personal care, the experience of childhood trauma, extreme loneliness, job loss, financial stress, or homelessness can lead to mental ill health and sometimes self-harming behaviours.

Everyone has a right to quality mental health care, regardless of income. Everyone needs to be part of a community that will support them, and everyone needs to know their pathway to recovery.

We need a truly integrated mental health system that links public, private, clinical and community services. And we need community healing places where people can access supported accommodation.

## ONE INTEGRATED MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

The Liberals' *Rethink Mental Health Plan 2015-2025* was launched two years ago. It wasn't, however, delivered with an Implementation Plan. The ten reforms were never prioritised or funded, and two years have been lost.

As a small and connected island, Tasmania can do something no other state in Australia has and close the gap between the Federal and State merry-go-round of mental health funding.

We can integrate funding and remove overlaps, and the dangerous gaps. The current agreement between *Rethink Mental Health (Tasmania)* and the *Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan (Federal)* presents an exciting opportunity for action.

The Greens will **establish a body to integrate mental health care systems and practices**, as proposed by the Mental Health Council. The 'Integrated Care Cooperative' would unite Federal, State and Local government services, to enable the best possible outcomes for Tasmanian communities.

The Cooperative will integrate primary, public, private and community mental health services. It will also end the system of separate funding decision-making by the Department of Health and Human Services and Primary Health Tasmania, improving the continuity of funding for staff, programs and infrastructure across all mental health services. It will establish seamless planning and service delivery, ensuring Tasmanians receive support in the right place and at the right time, with clear signposts about where to get help.

## THE GREENS WILL

- ▲ Create one integrated mental health system
- ▲ Invest in early intervention and effective recovery pathways
- ▲ Provide shared and consistent records for mental health patients
- ▲ Fund community recovery hubs to help access secure and supported housing
- ▲ Initiate a mental health services guide
- ▲ Build a peer-workforce plan
- ▲ Provide real care for carers

## **PATHWAYS TO RECOVERY**

Tasmanians need clear pathways to make sure early intervention occurs and recovery is effective and based on each person's different needs.

The Greens will fund the implementation of a **stepped model of care to integrate services** across the community, clinical, public and private sectors.

Our plan will provide clear pathways for people seeking mental health assistance, allowing more people to access care at an early and preventative stage in their recovery, rather than at a crisis point.

## **HEALING AND HOUSING IN COMMUNITY**

People in mental health distress need to be among supportive people, not left to sit at home in an empty house. Living in isolation, or not being able to find suitable housing after discharge from a clinical facility, does not help healing.

People need to be healed within communities that can provide short-term housing linked to rehabilitation services. They also need active help to find, and maintain, permanent housing.

The Greens will fund work with local councils and community groups to identify potential models, and locations around the State, suitable for community healing facilities. These will be places the whole community can share in, incorporating art, gardening, cooking or other healing activities. The Greens will commit **\$6 million towards establishing community healing hubs**. These could involve funding to re-purpose existing community places, or to build new ones.

We will also fund the work to establish formal partnerships between relevant clinical and community services to make sure people are not discharged without somewhere to go that is stable, supportive, and is linked to clinical and psychosocial rehabilitation services.

## **ONE CLIENT - ONE RECORD**

Doctors and service providers don't have all the data available about their patients, which can prevent them giving accurate and up-to-date support and advice.

Sometimes, the most vulnerable people fall through gaps between services. Others receive ineffective medication or interventions because records are incomplete or not communicated.

Tasmanians seeking help should only need to tell their story once. Their clinician or support service should have quick and secure access to a complete patient record across services, through record sharing.

The Greens will **trial a safe and secure software system for patient records in the area of suicide prevention**, as requested by the Mental Health Council. The trial will also involve consistent data reporting development.

Following a review of the trial, and addressing any issues it identifies, the Greens will fund a staged rollout of this data-sharing system across all mental health services.

## **TASMANIAN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES GUIDE**

When people are in mental distress, it is vital for them and their family to know who they can go to for support.

The mental health system is complex, and there are many clinical and community-run services. Some people spend too long getting an inappropriate service or in a facility because the pathway for where to go next is not clear.

The Greens will fund a **mental health services guide**. The Guide will help people navigate evidence-based recovery pathways. It will give health professionals, individuals and their carers a clear understanding of what the next suitable service for a person should be – given their particular stage of recovery.

## BUILDING A PEER SUPPORT BASE

Recruiting people who lived with or experienced mental ill health as peer workers can provide tremendous support and benefit to others in their recovery.

Peer workers share experiences and provide hope for recovery that is often missing in people's lives. It's a crucial part of improving the suffering of people with mental ill-health.

The Greens will fund a peer-led plan to increase the capability of people to be involved as peer workers.

Our plan will embed their experience in policy development, service design and delivery. We will ensure a diversity of people are included, such as young people, women, LGBTIQ people, and people living with a disability.

## CARING FOR CARERS

Carers provide volunteer physical, practical or emotional support to a family member, friends, neighbours or colleagues with mental health.

Caring can be a physical and emotional burden, and those carers are at risk of mental health distress themselves. It's critical the role of caring for people suffering mental ill health is understood, valued and supported.

The Greens will engage a Project Officer to work with Community Managed Mental Health Services and implement a practical guide for working with carers of people with a mental illness.

The Greens will also commit to funding a full-time Community Engagement and Communication Officer to support "hidden carers" – those family members and other people who don't identify as carers or who are not recognised by professionals for the role they provide.

## INITIATIVE COST

Initiative Investment (\$m)	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22
Pathways to Recovery	0.20	0.20	-	-
Peer workforce	0.15	-	-	-
Service guide	0.20	0.20	0.20	-
One Record	0.40	0.80	1.20	1.60
Community Healing Hubs	0.15	2.00	2.00	2.00
Looking after Carers	0.25	0.25	0.26	0.26
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.35</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>3.66</b>	<b>3.86</b>