



**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP**  
**Minister for Health and Ageing**

**SID SIDEBOTTOM MP**  
**Member for Braddon**

**JODIE CAMPBELL MP**  
**Member for Bass**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Improving patient transport services in Tasmania**

Patient transport and accommodation will receive a \$10 million boost to improve access to health services across Tasmania.

The funding will allow several new projects to be funded and allow existing services provided by the State Government to be enhanced.

Under the transport initiative, the Rudd Government will provide:

- Up to \$3 million to acquire additional patient transport vehicles in the north-west, north and south of the state;
- Up to \$3.1 million to establish low cost patient accommodation in Burnie;
- Up to \$90 000 for upgrades to the Spurr Wing accommodation complex in Launceston;
- Up to \$2.72 million to purchase new IT infrastructure and software to improve communication and coordination of patient transport and accommodation across the state;
- Up to \$300 000 to upgrade Queenstown Airport to ensure safe patient transfers;
- Up to \$20 000 to purchase appropriate patient transport and lifting equipment at Wynyard airport; and
- Up to \$770 000 to implement new 'telehealth' initiatives to reduce the necessity for patients to travel to receive health care.

Ms Roxon said the initiative takes into account the challenges in Tasmania resulting from a dispersed population, the terrain in many parts of the state, and the need to locate services in regional centres.

“We have worked with the Tasmanian Government to identify areas of need to improve patient transport and patient accommodation in Tasmania.

“I recognise the transport reviews undertaken by Tasmania and support the significant increased investment in patient assisted transport and accommodation rates that the Tasmanian Government has announced today.

“Today’s investment by the Rudd Government ensures we deliver on another commitment we made to the Tasmanian people. The initiatives announced today will improve the co-ordination of patient transport around the State and see significant new infrastructure funded to deliver improved transport and accommodation for those who need to travel for treatment,” said Ms Roxon.

Speaking today at the launch of Tasmania’s Patient Transport package, Sid Sidebottom said he was pleased the Rudd Government was delivering on yet another important health commitment to the people of his electorate of Braddon.

“I am particularly pleased that over \$3 million of the package will go towards low cost patient accommodation in Burnie; assisting many families who come to Burnie to receive vital medical treatment,” said Mr Sidebottom.

Member for Bass, Jodie Campbell said she was pleased that the package would see up to \$3 million spent on acquiring additional patient transport vehicles.

“I am pleased that the Launceston Spurr Wing Accommodation complex will receive \$90,000 to upgrade an important facility for Tasmanians coming to receive medical treatment at Launceston General Hospital,” said Ms Campbell.

Today’s announcement was made in conjunction with the release of the Tasmanian Government’s review of patient transport in Devonport.

**For Media inquiries, contact Ms Roxon's office (02) 6277 7220**