

# needs analysis

## Primary care Rural Innovative Multidisciplinary Models (PRIMM) Project

East Coast Tasmania

# table of contents

<b>Page 3</b>	<b>Background</b>
<b>Page 4</b>	<b>Executive Summary</b>
<b>Page 5</b>	<b>Social Determinants of Health</b>
Page 6	Employment
Page 7	Education
Page 8	Income
<b>Page 9</b>	<b>Chronic Health</b>
<b>Page 12</b>	<b>Mental Health</b>
<b>Page 14</b>	<b>Alcohol and Other Drugs</b>
<b>Page 15</b>	<b>Other Health Needs</b>

# background

This Needs Analysis is one of four key background documents developed for the scoping phase of the Primary care Rural Innovative Multidisciplinary Models (PRIMM) project on the East Coast of Tasmania. The purpose of PRIMM project is to develop a community-designed plan for multidisciplinary primary care services and innovative workforce solutions for the Glamorgan Spring Bay (GSB) Local Government Area (LGA).

Primary health services are defined as those which are delivered outside and acute setting with a restorative or health maintenance function. It includes general practice, nursing and services such as midwifery, pharmacy, dentistry, Aboriginal health services and allied health. The sector covers a range of public, private and non-government health services and health service providers.

## The four background documents are:

- **Literature Review** – to explore Tasmanian primary healthcare-related research and grey literature from rural and remote contexts, with a particular focus on the GSB LGA
- **Needs Analysis** – to provide a broad overview of the primary health needs
- **Funding Mapping** – to identify key sources and amounts of primary health funding into GSB LGA
- **Service Mapping** – to identify all primary health services delivered in the GSB LGA

These documents discuss primary health services that are delivered within GSB, remotely via telehealth, or accessed through travel outside of the GSB LGA.

These four documents constitute the scoping phase of the PRIMM project and will provide the basis for the second phase of this project, the consultations in July-December 2023. The third and fourth stages are service design and consolidation and workforce partnership.

## executive summary

The needs analysis illustrates that the GSB area has demographic indicators that point to more complex health needs than both the Tasmanian and Australian average. There is therefore a greater need for local, accessible, integrated primary health services.

Overall, the region is older, has lower rates of participation in the workforce and lower rates of educational attainment. This varies across towns, indicating that health services may need to be targeted towards the towns with the highest health needs.

There are primary health care issues common to regional Australia such as lower rates of cancer screening, and higher rates of potentially preventable hospital stays<sup>1</sup>. Other issues will be more specific to GSB. The consultation phase will be used as an opportunity to further explore the range of unmet health needs.

# Social Determinants of Health

The social determinants of health are the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. This section explores key social determinants including demographic trends, education, and employment in GSB LGA.

The population of the GSB LGA is 5,012 (2021 census) with 48.6 being female and 51.4 being male. The average age of the population is 57. This compares with the Tasmania average of 42 and the Australian average of 38. The population is therefore older and as such, would require more health services.

The three key largest towns in GSB are Triabunna, Swansea and Bicheno. Orford is 7.5km from Triabunna and therefore residents of Orford have a close connection to, and use services based in Triabunna. The next smaller town is Coles Bay with a population of 515.

For the purpose of demographic comparisons, the three larger towns will be examined in more detail. All data used in this section is ABS Census 2021 data.

Town	Population	Average Age (Aus 38)	% over 65 (Aus 17.2%)
Triabunna	905	51	30.5
Orford	685	62	43
Swansea	997	62	42
Bicheno	1049	54	29.4



# employment

Employment data indicates the participation in the labour force as lower than the Tasmanian average and lower again than the national average. Lowest participation rates in GSB are in Triabunna.

Employment - Participation in labour force	Triabunna		Swansea		Bicheno		Tas	Aus
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	%	%
In the labour force	337	43.0	410	44.3	481	52.2	58.2	61.1
Not in the labour force	412	52.6	464	50.2	377	40.9	36.5	33.1
Not stated	37	4.7	52	5.6	69	7.5	5.2	5.8



# education

Educational data indicates a lower level of educational attainment compared with Tasmania and lower again when compared with Australia. Lowest education rates in GSB are in Triabunna.

Educational attainment	Triabunna		Swansea		Bicheno		Tas	Aus
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	%	%
Bachelor Degree level or above	54	6.9	133	14.4	181	19.6	21.9	26.3
Advanced diploma and diploma level	42	5.4	98	10.6	81	8.8	7.9	9.4
Certificate level IV	27	3.4	25	2.7	28	3.0	3.5	3.5
Certificate level III	136	17.3	150	16.2	118	12.8	15.0	12.6
Year 12	87	11.1	93	10.1	99	10.7	12.0	14.9
Year 11	42	5.4	39	4.2	39	4.2	4.3	4.6
Year 10	173	22.1	172	18.6	159	17.2	15.9	10.0
Certificate level II	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	0.1
Year 9 or below	136	17.3	118	12.8	0	0	8.6	7.2
Not provided/ no attainment	100	12.8	101	10.8	89	9.7	10.9	11.4

# income

Income data indicates a lower level of income compared to Tasmania and lower again compared to Australia. Lowest income levels in GSB are in Triabunna.

## Income level

Median Weekly Income	Triabunna	Swansea	Bicheno	Tasmania	Australia
Personal (a)	\$493	\$565	\$631	\$701	\$805
Family (b)	\$1,125	\$1,272	\$1,292	\$1,720	\$2,120
Household (c)	\$919	\$929	\$1,030	1,358	\$1,746

(a) Excludes people aged 15 years not over who did not state their income.

(b) Excludes families where at least one family member aged 15 years and older did not state their income.

(c) Excludes households where at least one household member aged 15 years and older did not state their income.

The GSB Community Health Check (2021)<sup>2</sup> provides a good overall summary of the key demographic and health indicators for the population.



# chronic health

Census data indicates that Tasmanians have a higher percentage of all long-term health conditions compared to Australia. In Triabunna all health conditions (except dementia) are higher than the Tasmanian average (11/12). In Swansea all health conditions (except Asthma and Kidney Disease) are higher than the Tasmanian average (10/12). In Bicheno only

Arthritis, Cancer, Heart Disease, and Lung Condition are higher than the Tasmanian average (4/12).

Health Conditions, long term	Triabunna		Swansea		Bicheno		Tas	Aus
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	%	%
Arthritis	168	18.6	214	21.5	149	14.2	12.2	8.5%
Asthma	113	12.5	72	7.2	91	8.7	9.4	8.1%
Cancer (including remission)	43	4.8	59	5.9	50	4.8	3.4	2.9%
Dementia (including Alzheimer's)	4	0.4	31	3.1	7	0.7	0.8	0.7%
Diabetes (excluding gestational diabetes)	69	7.6	88	8.8	48	4.6	5.1	4.7%
Heart disease (including heart attack or angina)	71	7.8	62	6.2	58	5.5	4.5	3.9%
Kidney disease	11	1.2	9	0.9	11	1.0	1.1	0.9%
Lung condition (including COPD or emphysema)	43	4.8	31	3.1	40	3.8	2.5	1.7%
Mental health condition (inc depression, anxiety)	109	12.0	120	12.0	79	7.5	11.5	8.8%
Stroke	15	1.7	21	2.1	4	0.4	1.2	0.9%
Any other long term health conditions	87	9.6	97	9.7	77	7.3	8.9	8.0%

## chronic health (continued)

When examining those who have multiple long term health conditions<sup>3</sup>, it is notable that there are a higher number of people in Triabunna with three or more conditions compared to Swansea and Bicheno. The total number of people with three or more conditions across these three main towns are 1,178 people.

### Multiple long term health conditions

Number of long-term health conditions	Triabunna	Swansea	Bicheno
1 condition	196	269	255
2 conditions	101	110	66
3 or more conditions	75	66	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>361</b>

# chronic health (continued)

## GP Chronic Disease Management Plans

A GP can prepare either a GP Management Plan or Team Care Arrangements to work with a patient for Chronic Disease Management. These plans ensure that clients are able to access Medicare rebates for certain allied health services and also are supported by practice nurses. The recent Commonwealth budget announced further initiatives to better support people with chronic health conditions through the funding of multidisciplinary care.

In GSB there are 790<sup>4</sup> people who are on a GP Chronic Disease Management Plan. Given that there are 1,178 people in Triabunna, Swansea and Bicheno alone with 3 or more long term health conditions this indicates that there is a potential for more people to be assessed and considered for a Chronic Disease Management Plan.

In order to more adequately manage chronic conditions, a comprehensive set of allied health services is necessary. There are a range of allied health services available in GSB including OT, counselling, physiotherapy, podiatry, and speech pathology. The availability of these services is noted in the service mapping paper and will be the subject of further investigation in the community consultation process.

## GP Client Presentations

For the South East Region of Tasmania the following table details the average number of GP client presentations<sup>5</sup> per annum, by age group compared with the Australian average.

### GP client presentations by age

Age group	South East Tas average number of presentations	Australian average number of presentations
0-24	4.4	4.2
25-44	4.7	5.2
45-64	5.5	6.7
65+	9.3	12.0
<b>Average</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>6.3</b>

The average age of the population in South East Coast is 57 compared to the Australian average of 38. Evidence indicates that as the population ages, the number of health conditions increases. As the population in this location is significantly older than the Australian average, it would be assumed they would use significantly more health services. This relatively low number of presentations of over 65 years of age population requires further examination in the consultation phase.

# mental health

There are higher rates of mental health conditions in Triabunna and Swansea, compared to the Tasmanian and national averages. Conversely Bicheno has lower rates of mental health conditions compared to both the Tasmanian and national average. Compounding the complexity of services for people with mental illness, most people with a mental illness also have chronic disease.

Rates of mental health conditions (ABS, as previously outlined)	Triabunna		Swansea		Bicheno		Tas	Aus
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	%	%
Mental health condition (inc. depression, anxiety)	109	12.0	120	12.0	79	7.5	11.5	8.8

## mental health (continued)

The PHT Needs assessment states that about 1 in 5 Tasmanians experience health problems in any year<sup>6</sup>, or 927 people in GSB, this can be broken down on a per capita basis.

### Numbers of people with mental health problems in Tasmania and GSB.

	% of population	Tasmania	GSB
Severe mental health disorder	2.6%	14,860	130
Moderate mental health disorder	5.3%	29,721	266
Mild mental health disorder	10.6%	59,442	531
<b>Total</b>		<b>104,023</b>	<b>927</b>

There are limited number of local mental health services and a limited number of visiting services. Psychiatry has been noted as a gap. There is a likely need for better mental health care across all age groups, with levels of psychological distress noted as high among younger Tasmanian's aged 18-34<sup>7</sup> and noting the importance of mental health services for older people.

As outlined in the PHT Needs Assessment, for those Tasmanians with a psychotic illness, psychosocial support needs are substantial and largely unmet. More than half of people who died by suicide had a previous mental illness diagnosis. The report highlights that people find it hard to navigate the mental health service system and there is a lack of integration between services, requiring people to retell their stories.



# alcohol and other drugs

AOD use is associated with increased rates of mental illness, infectious disease, injuries, and death. It can contribute to pregnancy complications, cancer, cerebrovascular, cardiovascular, liver and digestive diseases.

## **According to the most recent survey results in Tasmania in 2019 among people aged 14 and over:**

- 1 in 4 people consumed 5 or more drinks in one sitting (at least monthly)
- 1 in 6 people used an illicit drug in the past 12 months.

Rates of alcohol consumption are higher in Tasmania than Australia as a whole, whereas rates of illicit drug use are similar in Tasmania compared with Australia<sup>8</sup>.

In 2019-20 a total of 2,761 Tasmanians (aged over 10 years) received treatment from specialist AOD services<sup>9</sup>. On a per capita basis this is the equivalent of 25 people in GSB. The main service types are counselling and rehabilitation.

In GSB there are no dedicated AOD services. Furthermore, data on the usage level of statewide services by GSB residents is not available. Opioid substitution treatment is more difficult in GSB given the lack of pharmacies open 7 days per week. It has been difficult to locate information on smoking rates in GSB and this is an issue which will be further investigated. The availability and use of AOD services requires further investigation and consultation.



# other health needs

## Emergency Department Presentations

According to THS, there were 229 ED presentations by GSB residents for non-admitted Triage Category 4 and 5 in 2021-22. Triage Category 4 and 5 are split into thirds with approximately one third primary care, one third is possibly primary care but their condition implies urgent investigation and the last third arrived by ambulance or from a GP letter<sup>10</sup>. Therefore, between one third and two thirds (76-153) of ED presentations could possibly be treated in an alternative setting if the appropriate service was available.

It is unclear from the data provided what the presenting health issues were that required ED attendance.

The commonwealth budget announced funding for GPs to better support frequent hospital users. The extent and uptake of this may impact positively on ED presentations.

## Technology

Technology has become increasingly important and gaining momentum during the pandemic. There are significant connectivity issues on the East Coast of Tasmania that potentially hold back innovations in tele health service delivery through technology. This will be further investigated in the community consultation process.

Telehealth is now a valuable tool for primary health care delivery. It has received a further boost in the budget with telehealth GP appointments of 40 minutes or more available for MyMedicare enrolled patients.

My Health Record is also an important and undervalued electronic management record that could be more widely used by health users and health professionals to the benefit of the client.

## Indigenous Health Needs

There are 221 people (4.4% of the population<sup>11</sup>) in GSB who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, they live mainly in Triabunna and Orford. Indigenous Australians face significant health inequities including lower life expectancy, higher chronic disease and mental health disorders, and higher rates of smoking and obesity. This is compounded by challenges in accessing services that are accessible and culturally safe.

# references and notes

1. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-03-23/analysis-rural-regional-health-needs-brave-fixes-jack-archer/102123554>
2. <https://www.primaryhealthtas.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Glamorgan-Spring-Bay-Community-Health-Check-2022.pdf>
3. Long Term conditions comprise: arthritis, asthma, cancer (including remission), dementia (including Alzheimer's), diabetes (excluding gestational diabetes), heart disease (including heart attack or angina), kidney disease, lung condition (including COPD or emphysema), mental health condition (including depression or anxiety) and stroke. This count excludes 'Any other long-term health condition(s)'.
4. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/primary-health-care/medicare-subsidised-gp-allied-health-and-specialis/data>
5. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/primary-health-care/medicare-subsidised-health-local-areas-2019/contents/about>
6. Primary Health Tasmania Needs Assessment 2022-25, P67
7. Primary Health Tasmania Needs Assessment 2022-25, P67
8. Primary Health Tasmania Needs Assessment 2022-25, P82
9. Primary Health Tasmania Needs Assessment 2022-25, P86
10. Data from Monitoring, Reporting and Analysis Unit, THS, May 2023
11. <https://profile.id.com.au/tasmania/population?WebID=220>

# working together for health and social equity