

**TASMANIAN COUNCIL OF HOSPITAL AND HEALTHCARE AUXILIARIES
AFTERNOON TEA TO ACKNOWLEDGE VOLUNTEERS
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, FRIDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2024**

Good afternoon. I warmly welcome you all to Government House.

I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose land we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their deep connection to land, sea and waters.

As Patron of the Auxiliaries, I am delighted to host this event to thank you and celebrate and recognise the many contributions of volunteers who serve in our Tasmanian Hospitals and the Healthcare Auxiliaries.

Today is also an opportunity to reflect on the selfless commitment, compassion and dedication each of you brings to our healthcare system and our communities.

The Auxiliary motto – 'For the care, comfort and welfare of all' – represents your dedication to helping our community. It exemplifies the Department of Health's organisational values of: care; compassion; accountability; respect; and excellence. We cannot measure this in hours worked or tasks completed; it is the immeasurable impact you have on the lives of patients and their families, and on the morale of our healthcare staff.

The Auxiliaries have a long history of work in Tasmania, over 90 years of service. While the Royal Hobart Hospital Central Auxiliary signed off last year, the Central Auxiliary of the Launceston General Hospital and the 4K Children's Ward Auxiliary have been operating for over these 90 years.

The fundraising activities of the Auxiliaries are diverse and imaginative, including kiosks, raffles, stalls, fashion parades, sausage sizzles, fêtes, and running tip shops.¹

¹ Personal communication from Lou Partridge.

Your independence is an important feature of your operation, so that control over fundraising activities, and over expenditure of funds is maintained.

Auxiliaries are also supported by bequests and donations, and other individuals and groups. I understand that that several years ago the Campbell Town Auxiliary was the recipient of funds from the auction of a prize-winning ram, which must be one of the more unusual fundraising methods!

However, the Auxiliaries play a broader role than just fundraising, providing an important link between the health system and the community. They are both a sounding board and feedback mechanism for hospitals and ensure that local communities are provided with health services that meet their needs. This is particularly important in our regional communities.²

It is important to recognise the complexities involved in running Auxiliaries today. Since our last event here in 2022, the number of Auxiliaries in Tasmania has shifted from 30 to 23. The drop in the numbers reflects the complexity of operating volunteer, not-for-profit entities today. Volunteers have increased mandatory training and accountability requirements and responsibilities and increasing demands on their personal and professional time.

Auxiliaries are adapting to these pressures by drawing their members from wider sections of the community, including retired health care workers and students.

Today, I want to acknowledge and thank you for your hard work and diligence in keeping the Auxiliaries functioning and in supporting our healthcare system.

I am pleased to see that, in this past year, life and long service memberships have been awarded to Auxiliary members at: North-West Regional Hospital; Mersey Community Hospital; the Central Auxiliary of Launceston General Hospital; the Holman Clinic; and Campbell Town and Scottsdale hospitals.

Congratulations to you all!

² Primary Health North (10 February 2021), *Our Healthcare Future*, pg 25.

I am very proud to be associated with the Auxiliary movement to reflect the importance of Auxiliaries, and the esteem with which your work is held, both with Government and across our community.

Thank you. And please enjoy your visit to Government House.