



Office of the Custodial Inspector Tasmania

We have released our health care inspection report. This covers mental health, physical health, and substance use management.

The report was tabled in parliament and published on our website. You can ask for a copy from the library or read it on Moodle.

Thank you to everyone who spoke to us during the inspections.

Below is a summary of some of the findings from our report.

What changed since our last health care inspection in 2017:

- You can now lodge medical request forms confidentially
 - Webster packs, with a weeks' worth of your medication, are now available for people in RBP
 - Take-away Panadol/paracetamol is now available in RBP and VGU
 - The medical chit process was reviewed and improved
 - DBT program is now available in MHWP
 - Medical screening processes on admission have improved
 - Mental health staff numbers are slowly increasing
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What we found during these inspections:

- Frequent lockdowns impact your mental and physical health and are restricting access to services and programs
- Dental care is limited, it is not meeting demand
- Getting pain-killers after-hours in all prisons is an issue
- Access to services, such as drug and alcohol counselling, should be based on need, not legal status
- More health staff should be employed to meet your needs
- The response to COVID-19 was world class

We made 117 recommendations to improve health care in prison.

These covered issues like:

- CPHS should give you at least seven days of medication on release instead of three
- There should be an evening medication round. This will help people on sleeping and mental health medication
- Over the counter medication (like Panadol) should be easier for you to access
- TPS should supply you with products to clean needles or start a needle exchange program
- Dentist services should be doubled and be available to everyone, not just people serving a sentence of 6 months or more.
- CPHS should talk to you before making any changes to your medication
- CSU should be upgraded to make it more therapeutic
- Medical escorts should be increased and there should be more telehealth options
- The way drug and alcohol withdrawal is managed should be reviewed to make sure you get good care
- The criteria to get on the S8 program should be reviewed and those on the program should have access to therapy

The Department of Justice and Department of Health's responses to our recommendations are in the report.

