



# **Huon Valley Council Rural Health Strategy**

**Working Draft  
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# Introduction

The Huon Valley Council has adopted this Strategy to direct its future growth and development of rural health services in the Huon Valley, to embrace the vision of ***a healthy community with affordable and accessible health services.***

The Strategy provides direction to be undertaken by the Council to further develop rural health services in the Huon Valley. The Strategy identifies significant opportunity for the Council, through it's staff, to work with a range of stakeholders to achieve the outcomes identified.

This Strategy is also intended to provide a resource available for review by those considering development or involvement in rural health services in the Huon Valley and other tiers of Government.

Four key areas of rural health service delivery have been identified as a component of the development of this Strategy. Those key areas are as follows:-

- **Aged Care and Housing**
- **Medical Services**
- **Rural Health Services**
- **Health Promotion Activities**

Each of these areas have had an objective identified and a series of strategies and actions prepared which, when complete will help meet the identified objectives.

The implementation of this Strategy will assist with:-

- Ensuring equity of access to quality health care
- Improved integration and coordination between services
- Improved cooperation between services and government programs
- Flexibility in order to take account of the diversity that characterises rural communities and necessary to ensure appropriate health care for the Huon Valley

# Aged Care and Housing

## OBJECTIVE

To provide affordable and accessible aged care and housing services to meet current and future community needs.

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Huon Eldercare</li> <li>• Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre</li> <li>• Huon Abbeyfield</li> <li>• Provision of Independent Living Units</li> <li>• Range of Respite services</li> <li>• Range of existing Commonwealth and State funded in-home services</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low levels of Commonwealth funding</li> <li>• Lack of coordination between existing services</li> <li>• Pockets of unmet need</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An aging community</li> <li>• Retirees moving to the area for a “sea” or “tree” change</li> <li>• Commonwealth funding opportunity</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability of the delivery of small scale aged care providers</li> <li>• Withdrawal or lack of funding for State and Commonwealth programs</li> </ul>

## KEY COUNCIL SERVICE DELIVERY AREAS

- Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre
- Independent Living Units
- Seniors Health Program

# Aged Care and Housing

## STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Key Service Delivery Area	Strategies	Actions	
Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre	Ensure the effective and sustainable operation and services delivered by the Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake the implementation of the Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre Site Development Strategy dated February 2009 which includes the following:-                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of a new staff room</li> <li>• Refurbishment of the two rural health rooms</li> <li>• Completion of the Palliative Care Suite</li> <li>• Refurbishment and expansion of the administration area</li> <li>• Refurbishment of the consulting rooms</li> <li>• Progress planning associated with the refurbishment of the residential aged care area</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accreditation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain Accreditation of the Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre with the Commonwealth Standards &amp; Accreditation Agency</li> <li>• Maintain other Accreditation requirements as required in line with the diversity of services delivered from the Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre</li> <li>• Embrace a Continuous Improvement philosophy in the delivery of all services provided from the Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise contemporary human services management practices to underscore the value and importance of staff</li> <li>• Embrace a culture of lifelong learning through a process of annual performance appraisals and training plan development and implementation</li> <li>• Foster a team and inclusive approach to the management of services delivered from and by the Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish, monitor and manage annual operational budgets closely to achieve sustainable financial outcomes</li> <li>• Undertake negotiations and develop a Partnership Agreement with the State Government to underpin the future operation of the Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre</li> <li>• Pursue funding opportunities as they arise to help diversify the Centre's funding base</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a close working relationship with Huon Eldercare and collaborate with Huon Eldercare where possible to achieve efficiencies in the delivery of aged care services</li> <li>• Maintain a close effective working relationship with the State Department of Health &amp; Human Services</li> <li>• Actively seek out service providers who operate in the Dover locality to network and form partnerships as appropriate</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Expansion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress investigations to deliver new programs to diversify the service delivery from the Centre to optimise facilities available</li> </ul>

# Aged Care and Housing

## STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Key Service Delivery Area	Strategies	Actions	
Independent Living Units	Progress the development of Independent Living Units at identified sites in selected population centres throughout the Huon Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue the operation of the three existing Independent Living Units and two Assisted Living Units</li> <li>• Undertake the implementation of the Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre Site Development Strategy dated February 2009 by progressing with the construction of the first two-bedroom unit (identified as Unit 14 on the Site Plan)</li> <li>• Proceed with the development of additional Independent Living Units in accordance with the Site Development Strategy as demand is identified and funding becomes available</li> <li>• Undertake the management of the Independent Living Units in accordance with the “Residential Tenancy Act” and utilising contemporary funding and management processes.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geeveston</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue the operation of the eight Independent Living Units at Geeveston</li> <li>• Undertake planning to identify locations (in close proximity to the Geeveston Medical Centre) to accommodate the development of additional Independent Living Units</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cygnet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue the operation of the six Independent Living Units at Cygnet</li> <li>• Progress the planning associated with the Site Development Strategy for the Council owned land located at George Street, Cygnet for the development of additional Independent Living Units in the Cygnet area.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify opportunities to work in partnership with others to develop Independent Living Units in other localities subject to demand and funding availability</li> </ul>

# Aged Care and Housing

## STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Key Service Delivery Area	Strategies	Actions
Seniors Health Officer	Continue to access Commonwealth Regional Health Service funding to engage an officer dedicated to the facilitation of activities for the senior members of the Huon Valley community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Develop a database of all Seniors groups within the Huon Valley</li> <li>•Network with relevant Seniors groups</li> <li>•Undertake projects and programs to meet the needs as identified by the various Seniors groups within the Huon Valley</li> <li>•Work closely with the funding body to ensure continuation of the RHS grant</li> <li>•Provide work plans and reports to the funding body as required</li> <li>•Undertake the administration associated with Independent Living Units</li> <li>•Plan or assist in the planning for the development of additional Independent Living Units</li> <li>•Participate in the annual Seniors Week activities</li> <li>•Produce and annual Seniors Events Calendar</li> </ul>

# Medical Services

## OBJECTIVE

To ensure the sustainable delivery of medical services which are accessible by all members of the Huon Valley community.

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing Council corporate knowledge</li> <li>• The Geeveston Medical Centre facility</li> <li>• The Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre facility</li> <li>• Representation of high numbers of Doctors in the Huonville area</li> <li>• Networks created between Council and various other bodies</li> <li>• Rural placement of third year medical students at the Geeveston Medical Centre</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of available Doctors in some areas</li> <li>• The age profile of some of the Huon Valley Doctors</li> <li>• Perceptions regarding Local Government involvement</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased networking and partnerships with private Practices</li> <li>• Potential further expansion of services</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of contemporary medical centre facilities in Cygnet</li> </ul>

## KEY COUNCIL SERVICE DELIVERY AREAS

- Geeveston Medical Centre
- Dover Medical Practice
- Cygnet Medical Services
- Huonville Medical Services

# Medical Services

## STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Key Service Delivery Area	Strategies	Actions
Geeveston Medical Centre	To operate the Geeveston Medical Centre to meet its full potential on a sustainable and cost effective basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Maintain AGPAL Accreditation for the Centre</li> <li>•Work closely with existing Doctors to encourage their longer term service delivery at Geeveston</li> <li>•Continue to train and develop staff</li> <li>•Maintain the building to a high standard</li> <li>•Equip the building to a high standard</li> <li>•Explore opportunities to further develop service provision from the Geeveston Centre</li> <li>•Access external grant funding opportunities as they arise to further develop the Geeveston Centre</li> <li>•Explore opportunities to expand opening hours to include Saturday mornings</li> </ul>
Dover Medical Practice	To operate the Dover Medical Practice to meet its full potential on a sustainable and cost effective basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Maintain AGPAL Accreditation for the Centre</li> <li>•Work closely with existing Doctor to encourage their longer term service delivery at Dover</li> <li>•Continue to train and develop staff</li> <li>•Maintain the building to a high standard</li> <li>•Equip the building to a high standard</li> <li>•Explore opportunities to further develop service provision from the Dover Centre</li> <li>•Access external grant funding opportunities as they arise to further develop the Dover Centre</li> <li>•Investigate opportunities to improve after hours access to medical services</li> </ul>
Cygnets Medical Centre	To work in partnership with stakeholders in the Cygnets community to plan for the development of a Medical Centre located on George Street to meet the future medical needs of the Cygnets community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Maintain close liaison with existing General Practitioners in the Cygnets area and prepare succession plans to ensure continuity of the provision of medical services in the Cygnets community.</li> <li>•Develop appropriate business case and concept plans for the future development and operation of a Cygnets Medical Centre</li> <li>•Access external grant funding opportunities as they arise to further develop the Cygnets Centre</li> </ul>
Huonville Medical Centre	Work closely with the principals of the two larger Medical Practices in the Huonville area to develop effective partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Meet with respective Doctors on an as needs basis</li> <li>•Work in partnership with the Doctors and assist with the provision of staffing as appropriate and available.</li> </ul>

# Rural Health Services

## OBJECTIVE

To facilitate and provide an affordable and accessible range of rural health services to meet current and future community need.

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing body of corporate knowledge within the Council</li> <li>• Experience in delivery of rural health programs</li> <li>• Networks and relationships established</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Government in Tasmania not recognised as a Health Services Provider</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service expansion utilising Huon Valley Health Services Advisory Committee funding</li> <li>• Partnerships with other Huon Valley Rural Health Service Providers</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Withdrawal of Commonwealth RHS funding</li> </ul>

## KEY COUNCIL SERVICE DELIVERY AREAS

- Service development
- Needs analysis
- Database
- Community Awareness
- Community Transport
- Respite Services
- Partnerships and Collaboration

# Rural Health Services

## STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Key Service Delivery Area	Strategies	Actions
Service Development	Maintain a watching brief to identify the development of new Rural Health Services to respond to the needs of the Huon Valley community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue participation in Rural Health Networking meetings</li> <li>• Maintain close working relationships with both the State and Commonwealth Government as well as private Rural Health Service Providers located in the Huon Valley</li> <li>• Undertake investigation, needs analysis and business case preparation for service development opportunities as they arise</li> <li>• Encourage representation in the Huon Valley by all mobile service providers (ie Breast Screening, Bone Density Scanning etc)</li> </ul>
Needs Analysis	Ensure existing needs analysis data as it relates to the rural health needs of the Huon Valley is updated on a regular basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work closely with and support the Huon Valley Health Services Advisory Committee to commission a consultant to review and update the Health Needs Analysis as prepared by the Huon Valley Council in 2006</li> </ul>
Database	Ensure the development and maintenance of a web enabled database providing easily accessible information on all Huon Valley based rural health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work closely with and support the Huon Valley Health Services Advisory Committee to commission a consultant to develop and maintain a web enabled rural health services database</li> </ul>
Community Awareness	Participate in identified promotional programs to raise the awareness of Council's Rural Health Services Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work closely with Council's Community Relations Officer to ensure regular development of media releases and rural health related stories</li> <li>• Ensure that the Council's website is regularly updated to reflect information in relation to the delivery of Council's Rural Health Services</li> <li>• Ensure respective service delivery programs have good quality brochures and distribute regular newsletters</li> <li>• Facilitate on an annual basis a Rural Health &amp; Wellbeing Expo</li> </ul>
Community Transport	Provide assistance in the development of community transport programs within the Huon Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and maintain a database of all existing community transport operators and community transport programs</li> <li>• Review the needs analysis documentation to identify gaps in the delivery of community transport in the Huon Valley</li> <li>• Work in collaboration with other service providers to provide programs to address the needs as identified</li> </ul>

# Rural Health Services

## STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Key Service Delivery Area	Strategies	Actions
Respite Services	Work to ensure the provision of sustainable respite services within the Huon Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue the delivery of the Carer's Respite Support Program from the Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre</li> <li>• Work in partnership to support the continued operation of the Huon Valley Respite Service</li> <li>• Work in partnership with Huon Eldercare to encourage the retention of Respite beds at the Huon Eldercare Residential Aged Care Facility</li> <li>• Include the provision of a Respite bed when progressing the Master Planning and future development of the Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre</li> </ul>
Partnerships and Collaboration	Take every opportunity to develop positive working relationships, partnerships and to work in collaboration with all Huon Valley Rural Health service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Council participation on the Huon Valley Health Services Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Continue attendance at the Rural Health Networking functions</li> <li>• Attend identified conferences and rural health activities</li> </ul>
In home	Work collaboratively to facilitate the delivery of an expanded range of in home services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work towards the provision of a dedicated Community Health Nurse being located at the Esperance Multi Purpose Health Centre</li> <li>• Develop a program to delivery in home services on a brokerage basis to existing service providers</li> <li>• Utilise Nursing staff to be increasingly involved with in home Health Assessment work</li> </ul>

# Health Promotion

## OBJECTIVE

To participate in the wide range of health and wellness programs and service delivery opportunities to help achieve positive health outcomes for the Huon Valley community.

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council's current involvement and corporate knowledge</li> <li>• Community support and interest</li> <li>• Existing collaborative working relationships</li> <li>• Qualified staff that eliminates the need to contract specialist services (cost effective).</li> <li>• Community networks that actively supports health programs (ie in schools)</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available resources (particularly coordination staff)</li> <li>• Remote access</li> <li>• Spread of locations</li> <li>• Lack of trust of Councils</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health promotion in Medical Centres</li> <li>• Participation in ongoing Health Promotion and Health Awareness programs and activities</li> <li>• Increased health promotion activities by existing health care professionals</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of interest in community to participate in programs</li> <li>• Loss of Commonwealth funding programs</li> </ul>

## KEY COUNCIL SERVICE DELIVERY AREAS

- Youth health
- Activities and Programs

# Health Promotion

## STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Key Service Delivery Area	Strategies	Actions
Youth Health	Continue to access Commonwealth Regional Health Service funding to engage a Youth Health Officer dedicated to the facilitation of activities for the youth of the Huon Valley community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The development of a comprehensive youth health annual plan in line with the community needs and the RHS Service Delivery Plan</li> <li>• To implement contemporary and creative programs that promote health and well being amongst young people and their families</li> <li>• Provision of community information sessions that highlight youth health issues and best practice guidelines for working with young people</li> <li>• Instigate specific identified health programs in the community based on community need that includes health promotion, community development and participation</li> <li>• Participate in the annual Rural Health Week</li> <li>• To act as a point of contact and referral source for a range of other health services available to young people and their families</li> <li>• Work collaboratively on activities and programs with health services located locally and based in Hobart</li> <li>• Regular consultation and networking with other youth health service providers</li> </ul>
Activities and Programs	Remain actively involved in program delivery to promote health and wellness in the Huon Valley community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health promotion programs</li> <li>• Rural Health &amp; Wellbeing Expo</li> <li>• Rural Health Planning Team</li> <li>• Huon Valley Health Services Advisory Committee</li> </ul>



## Evaluation & Health Outcomes

This three year Strategy shall be reviewed twice a year by the Rural Health Planning Team reporting to the Council.

At least once a year, the Rural Health Planning Team will prepare a press release to be included in the Huon Valley News and inserted on Council's website on progress implementing the Rural Health Strategy.

A section in Council's Annual Report each year shall refer to progress with the Rural Health Strategy.

At the end of the first and second of the life of the plan, the Rural Health Planning Team will in the report to the Council, comment on whether there needs to be any updates or changes to the Strategy.

Work on the development of a new Rural Health Strategy shall be undertaken in the third year of the term of this Strategy.