

Media release

Friday 11 September

Provider selected for new long-acting reversible contraception program

The operator of Tasmania's new long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) program has been announced following an open tender process undertaken by Primary Health Tasmania.

Family Planning Tasmania has been selected to deliver the new statewide program, funded under the Australian Government's Primary Health Networks program.

The LARC program is part of a national initiative to improve access and outcomes for patients, reduce waiting times and travel burdens to access services, and enhance equity of reproductive health care across the country.

Family Planning Tasmania will deliver the LARC program in Tasmania, improving access to long-acting reversible contraception by providing safe, inclusive and no-cost counselling, insertion and removal services for women, girls and gender-diverse people.

The LARC program will provide improved access to qualified healthcare providers able to provide LARC services in more locations, especially in regional, rural or remote areas where options are limited, as well as better access to contraceptive choices.

The LARC Centre of Excellence will be the training component of the program for healthcare professionals, particularly GPs, nurse practitioners, midwives and practice nurses. Accredited training can build confidence in LARC counselling, insertion, removal and referral pathways.

The Centre of Excellence will also strengthen Tasmania's primary care capacity to provide LARC services by offering education and supervision that strengthens capability.

This will include support across general practice, nursing and midwifery; guidance, templates and resources that help embed referral pathways, updating policies, and ensuring patients are well informed from first contact.

The Centre will also include mobile, telehealth and satellite models to extend reach into communities where access to services may be limited.

Primary Health Tasmania spokesperson Lucy O'Flaherty said Family Planning Tasmania was selected following an open tender process.

"Family Planning Tasmania has a strong track record in the delivery of long-acting reversible contraception services, and is well placed to be rolling out this statewide program," she said.

"The LARC Centres of Excellence and the LARC program will help more women get trusted advice, support and care closer to home, while also training more health professionals to deliver these services.

"Long-acting contraceptives can be an effective management and treatment option for women, girls and gender diverse people experiencing heavy menstrual bleeding, severe period pain, and endometriosis.

“The crucial aspect of this program is the training element. We are committed to working with health care providers to build their capacity to deliver LARC services.

“The program will integrate with existing referral networks, leverage MBS funding to sustain clinical activity, and contribute to the national evaluation framework.”

Marcus Di Martino, chief executive officer of Family Planning Tasmania said the organisation is excited to be delivering these additional services which will be implemented over the coming months.

“This program will be instrumental in giving Tasmanians more choice and improved access to reproductive health care,” he said.

“We’re delighted to have been selected as the provider, and are looking forward to working with the Tasmanian primary care workforce to increase access to this important healthcare to Tasmanians.

“Tasmania has an estimated 122,000 women of reproductive age, yet only 13-14,000 are current LARC users.”

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About Primary Health Tasmania

Primary Health Tasmania (Tasmania PHN) is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation working to connect care and keep Tasmanians well and out of hospital. It was established under the Australian Government’s Primary Health Networks Program to support and enable a coordinated, primary care-focused health system.

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