

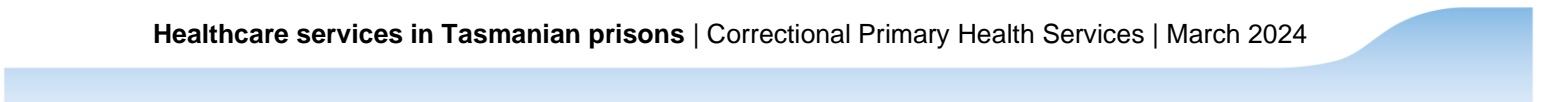


Correctional Primary Health Services

Healthcare services in Tasmanian prisons

A guide to health services provided in prison

March 2024



We acknowledge and pay respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the continuing custodians of this land, and acknowledge elders past, present and emerging.

This booklet is about healthcare in Tasmanian prisons.

If you have any further questions, or need anything in this booklet explained to you, fill in a Health Request form (available in your unit, or on the computer) to make an appointment with Health Services.

We can arrange an Interpreter to assist you.



Contact us

If you would like to speak to a Nurse or Doctor, after your initial health assessment, you need to request an appointment by filling in a Health Request form (see page 6 and 7 for more details).

Family members

There may be times that your family would like to contact Correctional Primary Health Services about your health and wellbeing.

We follow strict patient confidentiality. Details about your treatment cannot be released or shared without your consent.

If you agree to your family members getting information about your health, they can contact us during office hours and we will discuss the process with them.

Family members can contact us during office hours by phoning:

Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 5:00 pm

03 6166 1263

If you have any questions, please speak with Health Services staff during an appointment.

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About us

Correctional Primary Health Services are part of the Tasmanian Department of Health. We provide healthcare to people who are in the custody of the Tasmania Prison Service.

We operate healthcare centres in each prison across the State.

The centres are staffed by teams of Nurses, Pharmacists, Doctors and Allied Health staff.

Health assessment

When you arrive at the prison a Nurse will meet with you to discuss your health, how you are feeling and begin a detailed health assessment.

They will ask for your consent to obtain information about your medication from your GP or pharmacy, take blood and urine samples for testing and for permission to provide the prison with some of your information. The details of this will be explained to you.

The information you give to the Nurse will help us to provide you with appropriate healthcare.

The Nurse will ask you questions about:

- your medical history and physical health including any chronic health conditions
- your mental health (including previous history)
- medications you are taking (prescribed and/or others)
- are you Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- allergies and dietary issues
- alcohol or drug use
- disabilities.

We can then provide the services and referrals you need.

How to make an appointment

To make an appointment with the Health Service fill in a Health Request Form. The forms can be found in your Unit and on the computer system.

If you require assistance to fill in a form ask a Correctional Officer or other staff member.

How to submit completed form:

1. put in a confidential envelope and give to a Correctional Officer
2. put in the health mail box or
3. hand to nursing staff at the daily medication round.

Once we have received your form it is reviewed by one of our staff. If required an appointment will be made for you.

Cancelled appointments

Due to the environment the prison service may be locked down and health appointments cancelled.

This is frustrating for everyone, however it is beyond our control.

This may also impact on medical appointments that have been made for you outside the prison.

Services we provide

There are a range of health services you can access, including:

- appointments with a Nurse and/or Doctor
- health education and information such as
 - alcohol and drug information
 - how to quit smoking
- men's and women's health checks
- medications and pharmacotherapy (S8)

- blood tests and screening for blood borne viruses and sexually transmissible infections
- immunisations (hepatitis B, influenza, COVID-19 and others)
- hepatitis B and hepatitis C treatment
- treatment for accident or injury, including the management of persistent pain.
- physiotherapy
- dental services
- hearing and eye checks
- mental health assessments, treatments and referrals.
- Persistent Pain Self Management Program

Access to services

To access services, talk to the Nurse and/or Doctor at an appointment. Access to a service may be limited and is often decided by the demand for the service and/or the priority need of the patient.

You may need a referral and please note that some services will have a waiting list.

If you need access to other health services this may be able to be arranged, for example a Dentist. As this service has a long wait list you will be assessed by nursing staff in the first instance.

If you need to see a specialist a referral will be made to the Royal Hobart Hospital or other healthcare provider.

Once the referral is received at the hospital, it is reviewed by the specialist team and they decide how urgent this is and then add you to the waiting list. You will go on the same waiting list as other Tasmanians. There are times when we can offer Telehealth for specialist appointments, this is often the best way to receive treatment in a timely way.

The hospital will send you a letter via Correctional Health to confirm that an appointment has been made and how urgent they have deemed your case.

Due to prison regulations we cannot tell you the date or time of external appointments.

On release

You can also ask for a referral letter for your GP on release from the Prison to seek further healthcare.

If an appointment has been made for you the letter with these details will be placed with your property (before release) or posted to your address.

Please provide us with an address so we can tell the hospital.

Each letter has a reference number on the top right-hand side. If you need to you can phone the number to confirm or change your address with the hospital.

Medications

Receiving medication in prison

As part of your health assessment the nurse has asked you about the medications you are taking.

Correctional Health has to follow the rules of the Prison Service. This includes what can be brought into prison.

If you brought any medication into prison with you,, it will be decided whether you can keep them, this decision is made in conjunction with the Tasmania Prison Service.

We are not able to restart your medication until the Doctor or Pharmacy in the community has confirmed what you have been prescribed.

It can take time to get this information, and this may cause a delay in you receiving medications in prison, however, patient safety and medication are a high priority for our service.

Once we get your medication information our Doctor will review it with all the other information you have given us about your health.

They will then write the medication you need onto a chart, this is processed by the pharmacy, before it is put in a Webster-pak® for the nurses to administer.

Medication is given out twice a day.



Your medication may change

It is important to understand that the brand or type of medication may change and there are some medications that are restricted in the prison system.

If you were taking these medications in the community, they may be stopped or reduced. These medications are those that make you sleepy, can cause addiction or can be trafficked.

Any changes to what you are taking will be discussed with you and an alternative plan discussed.

Take medication as prescribed

It is important for your health that you take medications that are prescribed to you. It is not safe to take someone else's medication.

If you wish to stop taking medication, please discuss this with the Doctor or Nurse. If you are not taking the medication as it is intended, it may be reduced or stopped altogether. Any changes will be discussed with you.

The prescribing of medication is between you and the health care team. If you are not happy about the decisions that are made see page 11 to provide your feedback.

It is not a matter for the Tasmania Prison Service. The prison service has its own rules about medication.

Keeping medication in your cell

In some prisons you may be able to keep your weekly medication in your cell. This will depend on which medication you take and if it is safe for you to do so. The prison service has its own rules about medication.

You will be asked to sign an agreement with Correctional Health and abide by the prison rules.



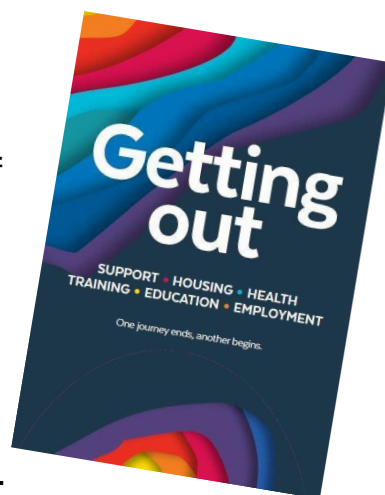
Examples of Webster-pak®

When you leave prison

If you are leaving prison, we can supply up to 10 days of your medication. Please let us know early so we can prepare this for you.

You will find more information on page 16 and 17 of this booklet in the **Leaving Prison** section.

You will find more information in the Getting Out booklet.



Your first days in Prison

Whether this is your first time in prison or you are returning everyone copes differently and it is normal to feel anxious and unsettled.

If you are feeling overly stressed your mood, appetite, sleep and general health may be affected. It is important to tell someone how you are feeling as soon as you can.

You may find you cope with change and settle into your new environment better by making a fresh start and creating good habits. You know what works best for you.

Here are our tips for staying healthy:

- Set a daily routine that makes you feel at ease
- Exercise regularly
- Get fresh air every day
- Wake up and go to bed at reasonable times to set a good sleep pattern (avoid naps during the day and limit coffee in the afternoon & evening). Please discuss with healthcare staff as they can provide you some information.
- Eat a balanced diet (meat, dairy, fruit and vegetables)
- Drink plenty of water, at least 1½ litres (1500 ml) every day
- Eat small amounts of foods high in fat, salt and sugar
- Talk to people, such as Health Service Team, Chaplain, Correctional Officers, Therapeutic Services Staff
- Get involved in programs and training - talk to Prisoner Education and Training (PEaT) staff to find out what's on offer.

It's OK to ask

We believe it is important to ask questions and for you to get the information about your health you need to understand.

It's OK to ask staff to repeat themselves, or ask for more information.

You can ask staff to jot down notes for you to help you to remember what they have told you. You can ask for a written healthcare plan.



See the poster of the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights on display in each Health Service.

You can also ask for a copy of the Healthcare Rights handout.

Your healthcare rights

As a person receiving treatment from Correctional Primary Health Services, you have the right to:

- Receive safe and high quality health services, provided with professional care, skill and competence.
- Be treated with respect to you and your culture, beliefs and values.
- Discuss options for your care in a way you understand and receive an explanation for new or unfamiliar terms.
- Have your personal health information protected and treated appropriately.
- Express concerns to the Correctional Primary Health Service without fear of affecting your care.

What is expected of you?

In providing you with the best possible health care, the Health Service expects you to:

- Respect the rights, safety and privacy of others.
- Respect the culture, beliefs and values of others.
- Treat others with respect and courtesy.
- Provide accurate information.
- Identify your needs and bring concerns to staff.
- Ask questions if the information given is unclear.
- Take part in your care and care planning.
- Keep appointments or notify ahead of time if you can't attend.

Zero Tolerance Policy

This means that abuse or violence towards health care workers is NOT OK and will not be tolerated.

Any inappropriate actions will be reported to the Tasmania Prison Service.

Feedback - Have Your Say

To provide feedback, or discuss a concern regarding Health Services, speak with Health Staff. They will assist you to sort out your concern or help you with the next step.

You can fill in a Complaints and Feedback Form to provide a written suggestion, complaint or compliment about the Health Service, forms are available in your Unit.

You may also wish to contact the Health Complaints Commissioner by mail:

Health Complaints Commissioner
GPO Box 960
Hobart TAS 7001

Or by Login to Unity

Press CADL, Press 1 Health Complaints Commissioner (Ombudsman)

Correctional Primary Health Services

Complaints and Feedback form

Do you have a complaint, suggestion, or compliment?
Fill in this form to have your say about health services*

* See over page for 'Ways to make a complaint'

Your Name: _____ D.O.B. or Offender Number: _____
 I am filling in on behalf of someone else (their name): _____
Date: _____ Site: _____

Would you like a response to the feedback you have provided below? YES NO

Your feedback

Tell us about your complaint, suggestion, or compliment.
What happened? When did this happen? Who was involved?

Not enough room to have your say? Please attach more pages. Please turn over

Department of Health Tasmanian Government

Correctional Health Inmate Consumer Group

The consumer group has been set up to ensure that inmates have a voice and can be involved in key activities that impact on health services in prison. The group activities include:

- Working with Correctional Health staff to ensure that the national standards of healthcare are met
- A forum to raise issues that impact on the health and wellbeing of inmates.
- To provide an inmate voice on decisions that impact on the delivery of health services
- To play a key role in the planning of health promotion activities within the prison.

An information brochure can be found in all health centres. If you are interested, you can email **Deb@Health** on the Moodle system for information about joining.

Research

Correctional Health conducts national and state research. This is always approved by a State Ethics committee. We believe it is important to have accurate information about inmate health. You will always be told if we are conducting research (it is confidential, so therefore you cannot be identified).

You do not have to participate, however, we thank you if you do as the information can be important in obtaining funding for specific programs.

Your health

You can take steps to look after your health.

The Health Service is here to assist, and you can also do a lot to ensure you are as healthy as possible.

Follow the tips to stay healthy on page 8 and here's some further advice.

Hand Hygiene

We all hate getting sick. To reduce or minimise infections such as colds and flu wash your hands regularly with soap and water.

Please ask nursing staff for further information.

For your health take the time to wash your hands thoroughly:

- before and after eating
- after using the toilet
- after working, gardening and cleaning
- after coughing or sneezing (always cover your cough)
- after using a tissue.

Cover your Cough

- To prevent the spread of infections always:
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze OR
- Cover your mouth and nose using your upper sleeve, not your hands, when you cough or sneeze.
- Put the used tissues in the bin
- Wash your hands with soap and water.



Immunisation

When immunisations are available, it is highly recommended that you have them. Talk to nursing staff if you have any questions regarding immunisation.

Common immunisations offered are:

- Influenza (flu) vaccinations
- Hepatitis B
- COVID-19

Smoke-Free Prison

Tasmania Prison sites are smoke-free, which means there is no smoking anywhere within the prison.



Tattooing and Injecting

There is no safe way to sterilise tattoo or injecting equipment in the prison. This means blood borne viruses can be easily passed from one person to another.

Blood borne viruses are common in prisons. Having a tattoo or injecting in the prison can put you at serious risk of getting a blood borne virus that may have severe impacts on your long term health. Hepatitis can lead to chronic liver disease and, for some people, liver cancer.

Treatment for Hepatitis C infection is available, discuss this with a member of the health team.

Leaving Prison

Please ask for a copy of the Getting Out booklet, which has more information to assist you.

Medications

When you are leaving prison, it is important that you let health staff know so that we can prepare. Correctional Health can provide you with up to ten (10) days medication supply.

Making a Doctor's appointment

If you need to see a Doctor when you are released you can ask a Case Officer, family member or a nurse to make you an appointment. It can take weeks to get an appointment, so do this early so you don't run out of medication.

This will enable you to have enough time to make an appointment with your GP in the community.

Leaving Prison - Referrals

If you have been referred to the hospital please let us know. If you live in the north or north-west of the state, you can have this appointment transferred.

You need to talk with a nurse who can arrange this. Appointment information will be placed with your belongings. See page 8 for more information regarding referrals.

Useful info and forms

You can access information and forms in the following ways:

1. Copies provided in your Unit
2. On the computer system
3. By asking a Correctional Officer, or
4. By asking Health Service staff during an

Information and forms include:

- Health Request form
- Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights
- Feedback Form "Have Your Say"
- General health information pamphlets
- Correctional Health Inmate Consumer Group
- Getting Out booklet

INFORMATION



Correctional Primary Health Services

Mail to: PO Box 104
Lindisfarne TAS 7015

Phone: 03 6166 1253

www.health.tas.gov.au

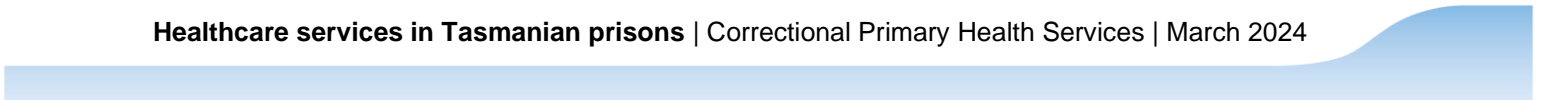


Tasmanian Health Service buildings are smoke-free sites.

The Tasmanian Health Service integrates acute, primary and community services.

This integration has given service providers the flexibility to ensure people have the best services we can provide, as close as possible to where they live. Statewide Mental Health Services deliver consumer centred services focused on improving health outcomes. Our services include inpatient facilities and community teams.

For full details on how to provide feedback, refer to page 14 of this booklet.





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