



# Tasmanian State Election 2024

Heart Foundation policy proposals  
for a healthier Tasmania

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# Introduction

In the face of growing health challenges for the state, the Heart Foundation calls upon all political parties and candidates in the upcoming Tasmanian State election to commit to a comprehensive health strategy.

This strategy should focus on the prevention and management of cardiovascular disease (CVD), as well as addressing the burgeoning vaping epidemic which is seeing a whole new generation becoming addicted to nicotine.

Cardiovascular disease remains one of the leading causes of death and disability in Tasmania, impacting our communities, our healthcare system, and our economy. Action is needed now to reduce the future prevalence of cardiovascular disease in our community, and to help those with cardiovascular disease live healthier and happier lives.

The Heart Foundation also calls for action to address the vaping epidemic that is affecting the state. Decades of work to reduce the prevalence and impact of tobacco on our health is now coming undone as a new generation of young people are being targeted by vaping companies with a product that we know is bad for heart health as well as a range of other diseases.

We propose practical solutions to create a healthier Tasmania for all and call on all political parties contesting the Tasmanian election to commit to the Heart Foundation's policy proposals.



# The Facts About Heart Disease in Tasmania



A higher proportion of people living in **outer regional and remote areas** are at high risk



Every year approximately **1,302 Tasmanians** die from cardiovascular disease



Proportion of Tasmanians aged 45 to 74 at high risk is **20% higher** than national average



Every year around **11,385 people** are hospitalised with cardiovascular disease

# 1 Primary Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease

## Objectives

1. **Promote Healthy Lifestyles:** implement statewide programs that encourage physical activity, healthy eating, and tobacco cessation. These programs should be accessible to Tasmanians of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds, with a special focus on at-risk populations.
2. **Enhance Public Awareness:** launch a comprehensive public awareness campaign on the risks of cardiovascular disease and the importance of early detection. This campaign should leverage different media platforms to reach a wide audience.
3. **Support Legislative Measures:** introduce policy measures to reduce the prevalence and accessibility of both tobacco and unhealthy foods. This includes supporting restrictions on the advertising of junk food, especially to children.

## Strategies

1. Develop and implement school-based programs that educate children on the importance of a healthy lifestyle from an early age.
2. Partner with local communities and organisations to create accessible and affordable opportunities for physical activity.
3. Work with healthcare providers to improve screening for cardiovascular risk factors, ensuring early identification and intervention.



## 2 Secondary Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease

### Objectives

1. **Improve Access to Care:** Ensure that individuals diagnosed with cardiovascular disease have timely and equitable access to care, including medications, rehabilitation services, and support groups.
2. **Strengthen Patient Education:** Provide comprehensive education to patients and their families about managing cardiovascular disease, including understanding their medications, recognising warning signs, and making lifestyle changes.
3. **Enhance Monitoring and Follow-up:** Implement systems to ensure regular monitoring and follow-up of patients with cardiovascular disease, to prevent complications and readmissions.

### Strategies

1. Invest in stage three of the Heart Foundation's project to improve cardiovascular rehabilitation services in Tasmania.
2. Increase funding for cardiac rehabilitation programs and ensure they are accessible across Tasmania, including in rural and remote areas.
3. Strengthen partnerships between primary care, specialist services, and community health services to ensure a coordinated approach to patient care.



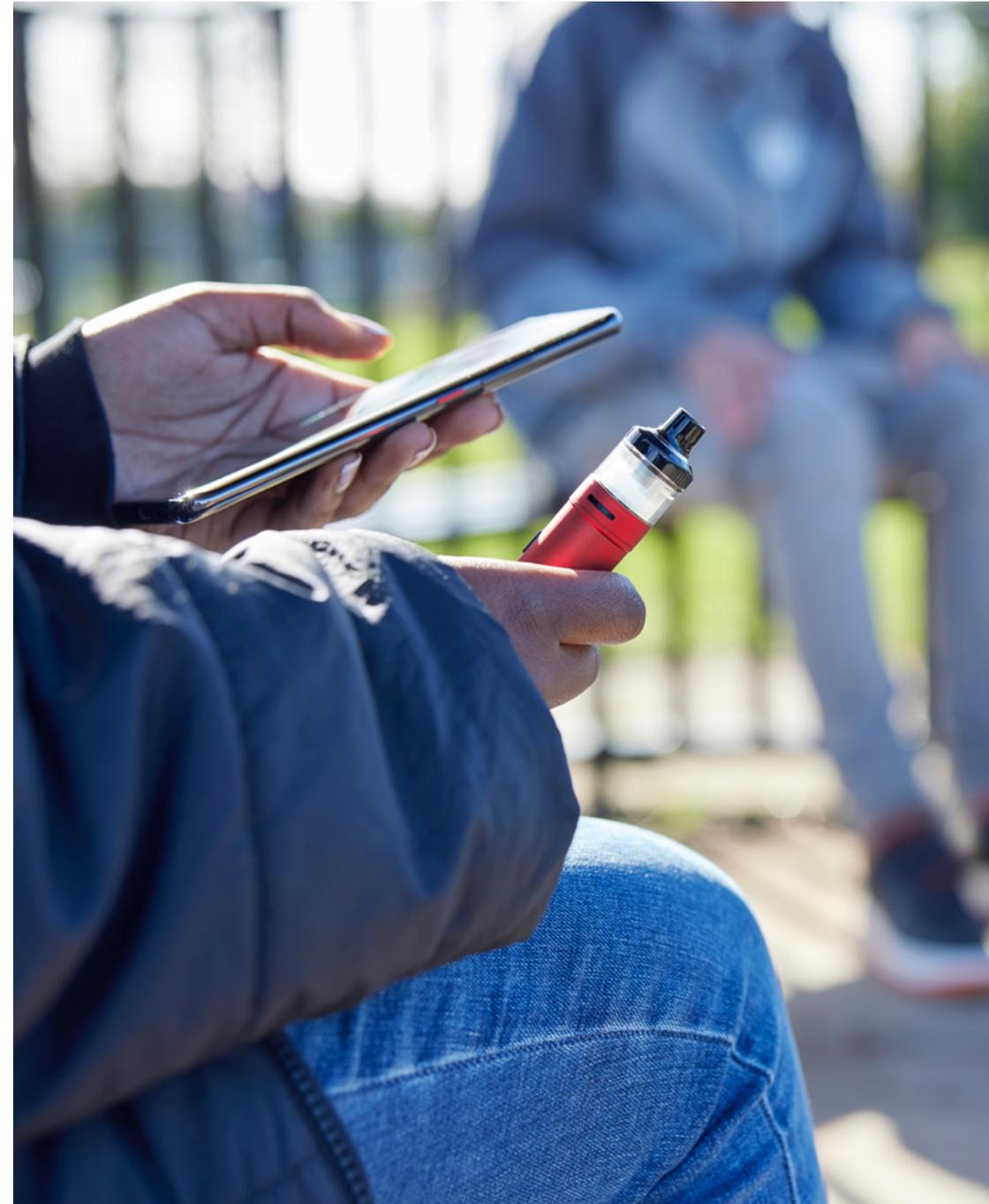
## 3 Curbing the Growing Vaping Epidemic

### Objectives

1. **Regulate Vaping Products:** Ensure vaping products are only made available as smoking cessation tool and through pharmaceutical settings.
2. **Educate the Public:** Launch an educational campaign targeting schools, parents, and young people to raise awareness about the health risks associated with vaping.
3. **Support Cessation Programs:** Develop and promote cessation programs specifically designed for individuals who wish to quit vaping, incorporating counselling and support services.

### Strategies

1. Work collaboratively with the Australian Government and other State and Territory Governments to ensure Australia's legislative and regulatory framework is robust and appropriately enforced.
2. Partner with schools and youth organisations to integrate vaping education into existing health curricula.
3. Leverage social media and other digital platforms popular among young people to disseminate factual information about the risks of vaping.



# 4 Support Cardiovascular Research in Tasmania

## Objectives

1. Support the research at the Menzies Institute for Medical Research in working collaboratively with health professionals, policy makers and the community to develop, implement and evaluate interventions to improve the cardiovascular health of Tasmanians.
2. Ensure research focussed on the current needs of the Tasmanian community is undertaken so that primary and secondary prevention policies are informed by a high calibre of up to date data.
3. Enable the attraction and retention of world class cardiologists to the Tasmanian health system through the provision of support for their research expertise.

## Strategies

1. Support the recent establishment of the Menzies Institute for Medical Research's Cardiovascular Research Flagship through the provision of priority funding for research.
2. Support the recruitment and retention of cardiovascular research talent in Tasmania.
3. Support the professional development of Tasmanian cardiovascular researchers to allow them to continue to conduct world-class research to reduce the burden of cardiovascular disease.



# Conclusion

The Heart Foundation is committed to working with the next Tasmanian government, healthcare providers, and the community to tackle the challenges of cardiovascular disease. By focusing on our priority areas, we can improve the health and well-being of Tasmanians, reduce the burden on our healthcare system, and ensure a brighter, healthier future for our state. We urge all political parties and candidates to support these priorities and work collaboratively towards a heart-healthy Tasmania.

Together, we can make a significant impact on the health of our communities, creating a legacy of wellness for generations to come. The time for action is now. Let's unite for a heart-healthy Tasmania.





[heartfoundation.org.au](http://heartfoundation.org.au)

# Thank you for helping us in our fight to *save* Tasmania's hearts.

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*The Heart Foundation acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respect to them and their cultures, and Elders past, present and future.*