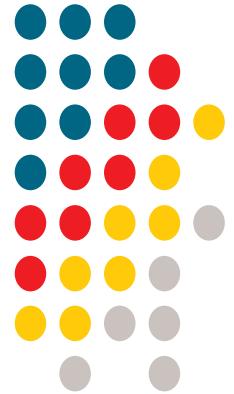


TASMANIAN COALITION OF BRAIN INJURY SERVICE PROVIDERS (TCASP)

‘Neglected, not Forgotten’ Campaign Newsletter No 2

November 2007



Acquired Brain Injury is often called the ‘Hidden Disability’ because its long term problems are usually in the areas of thinking and behaviour and are not as easy to see and recognise as many other disabilities.

Considering it is estimated 7 Tasmanians per day will acquire a brain injury, government can no longer continue relegating acquired brain injury to the too hard basket.

One of TCASP’s roles is to raise community awareness and understanding of acquired brain injury and to ensure that ABI becomes visible; that it no longer be a ‘hidden disability’. As part of this process, in early November, TCASP wrote to all Tasmanian candidates standing for the Federal Election.

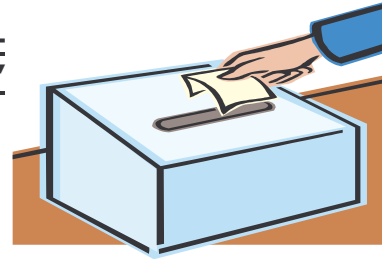
Each candidate was forwarded information on acquired brain injury and asked to respond. Candidates were asked : “How will you support Tasmanians with acquired brain injury and what is your commitment to addressing the historical neglect of people living with ABI in Tasmania?”

In this edition you will find the responses received from candidates prior to the printing of this newsletter on 19th November.

For more information on TCASP or if you wish to support our campaign please contact BIAT on:- Phone: (03) 6278 7299 or email: enquiries@biat.org.au

The challenge for Tasmanian voters is to remind all candidates of the slogan:

**"MY VOTE COUNTS FOR DISABILITY—
DOES YOURS ?"**



Below is a copy of the letter, dated 2 November, as sent to all Tasmanian candidates standing in the November Federal election. On page 3 you will find all the candidates and contact details. Page 4 outlines responses received from candidates/parties. *Please note that TCASP members or their organisations do not promote any particular candidate or political party. Each response received or not received is noted for your information only.*

Dear

Re: ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY IN TASMANIA

The Tasmanian Coalition of Acquired Brain Injury Service Providers (TCASP) seeks your timely response to the following issue and asks how you will work towards a solution for the many Tasmanians living with acquired brain injury.

It is estimated that each year 2500 Tasmanians will acquire a brain injury as a result of trauma, stroke, hypoxia, infection, alcohol & substance abuse, and degenerative neurological disease (that's nearly 7 people per day). Less than 2% of these Tasmanians will receive any services or support through the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Disability Services Program. This is totally unacceptable in an affluent democratic society that attests to equality and anti-discrimination.

Due to the ongoing neglect of and discrimination against Tasmanians with acquired brain injury, the 'Ignored, Not Forgotten' campaign was launched at Parliament House Hobart on the 14th March 2007.

For many years acquired brain injury has been placed in the 'too hard basket'; it is now time to turn back the tide of neglect. TCASP members seek to work co-operatively with **all** levels of government to find and implement solutions to bring about positive change for people with ABI and their families in Tasmania.

TCASP is now asking will you support Tasmanians with acquired brain injury and TCASP's 'Neglected, Not Forgotten' campaign, and what is your commitment to addressing the historical level of neglect of people living with ABI in Tasmania?

Please find attached a Campaign newsletter that clearly outlines the key messages of TCASP. TCASP will be releasing the second edition of the Campaign newsletter prior to the 2007 Federal Election. This edition will be a special 'Election' issue and will contain information on responses received (or not received) to this request. We look forward to your timely response.

Yours sincerely

Mary Langdon
TCASP Spokesperson

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Candidates for Federal 07 Election – Tasmania

ELECTORATE	LABOR CANDIDATE	LIBERAL CANDIDATE	GREENS CANDIDATE	OTHER PARTIES	INDEPEND- ENTS
BASS	Jodie Campbell	Michael Ferguson	Tom Millen	Shem Bennett (LDP) Adrian Watts (CEC)	Sven Weiner (TAP)
BRADDON	Sid Sidebottom	Mark Baker	Paul O'Halloran	Stephen Dick (CEC)	
DENISON	Duncan Kerr	Leigh Gray	Helen Hutchinson	Rob Larnar (CEC)	
FRANKLIN	Julie Collins	Vanessa Goodwin	Gerard Velnaar		
LYONS	Dick Adams	Geoff Page	Karen Cassidy	Ray Williams (CEC)	

Names in bold denote the current standing members

Note: CEC = Citizens Electoral Council of Australia
 LDP = Liberty & Democracy Party
 TAP = Tasmanians Against the Pulp Mill

Contact details:

Labor:

Duncan Kerr – GPO Box 32, Hobart, 7001
 Dick Adams – 53b Main Road, Perth TAS
 Julie Collins – PO Box 38, ROSNY 7018
 Jodie Campbell – PO Box 2047, Ltn, 7250
 Sid Sidebottom – C/- Post Office, FORTH 7310

Liberal:

Vanessa Goodwin – 24 Cobbler Street, Seven Mile Beach 7070
 Geoff Page – 3 Bushby Close, PROSPECT 7250
 Leigh Gray – 295 Elderslie Road, BRIGHTON 7030
 Michael Ferguson – 100 St.Johns Street LTN 7250
 Mark Baker – 32 Wilmot Street BURNIE 7320

Greens: All candidates – Tasmanian Greens, 83 Harrington Street Hobart 7000

Other parties: CEC Candidates –Citizens Electoral Council of Australia, PO Box 71, North Hobart 7003
 LDP– Shem Bennett – PO Box 489 Seaford, VIC 3198 (until he returns to Tas after 14th Nov)

Independents: Mr Sven Wiener, PO Box 55 Exeter 7275

Voters on a disability pension in BASS and BRADDON

According to the Australia Fair campaign (www.australiafair.org.au) in the electorates of:

- BASS, voters needed to change their votes to lose the seat (currently held by Michael Ferguson) is 1643 votes; there are 4,456 voters in Bass on a disability pension
- BRADDON, voters needed to change their votes to lose the seat (currently held by Mark Baker) is 733 votes; there are 5,260 voters in Braddon on a disability pension.

Make your vote count! People with disability have an historic opportunity to influence the outcome of the election this year and help deliver policies to enable people with disability to fully participate in society.

Responses received are below.

Please note: TCASP would like to thank those who did respond in the timeframe given. We do understand however that, due to time restrictions, some candidates may not have had the opportunity to respond prior to the printing and distribution of this newsletter.

Rob Lerner - Citizens Electoral Council of Australia TAS (CEC) -DENISON; This was the first response received. Included were CEC's Health Statement/Policy and a flyer highlighting the CEC's National Fighting Platform. A copy of CEC's health policy can be found at www.cecaust.com.au. Briefly, their health policy states "There is only one health issue - lack of funding. There are a litany of health problems, including nurse shortages, doctor shortages, not enough bulk-billing, overburdened hospitals, and the lack of Medicare funding for dental care, but they all flow from the lack of funding".

Sven Wiener - Independent for BASS; "Thank you for your letter of 2 November. My apologies for the late reply. It has been very hectic. It is my understanding that the incidence of acquired brain injury is on the rise and it is vital that we make provision adequately to ensure that the health of these individuals is not allowed to deteriorate badly. As a regular cyclist, I'm very aware of just how easily anyone can be involved in a car accident and have their life turned upside down. It would be inhumane for the Australian Government to cutback on funding for acquired brain injury sufferers."

Duncan Kerr - Labor - DENISION; Mr Kerr provided a comprehensive 2 page response that highlights Federal Labor's guarantees for funding into disability. There was also an 8 page document attached '*Labor's fact sheet on Disability and Carers*'. The documents are not specific to acquired brain injury, but speak on a Federal level of disability service provision. As space does not permit the full transcript to be reproduced, the essence of the response follows: "A Rudd Labor Government will guarantee services for people with disabilities and their carers - and provide certainty. A Rudd Labor Government would ensure \$962 million allocated by the Coalition for accommodation, respite, and in home support is brought back into the Commonwealth State Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA) and available to the States and Territories on a dollar for dollar matching basis. This approach would result in an injection of \$1.9billion in funding for people with a disability".

Adrian Watts - CEC - BASS; Mr Watts provided a 1 page personal response, and two publications of the CEC. Again, space does not permit reproduction of the full transcript; an extract follows:- " I am very aware of your problems and obviously support your endeavors. I first met with your group when I was President of the Dorset Community House at, I believe a TasCOSS briefing. Your concerns then were a shortage of just about everything needed, the age of your helpers and the effects of public liability and its coverage (or lack thereof) especially for the older helpers".

Dick Adams - Labor - LYONS; "Thank you for forwarding your memo regarding the Tasmanian Coalition of Acquired Brain Injury Service providers and I understand the concerns that your organisation has in dealing with the hundreds of requests for help. I can see that there are many needs that should be addressed and I will do my best to work with the other level of governments to try and highlight the needs of this group of people and come up with some solutions. As State Patron for Riding for the Disabled, I know what few services are available. Thank you for advising me of your campaign and I hope that with a change of Government, there will be a better ability to help".

If anyone wishes to read the full responses from candidates, please phone BIAT on (03) 6278 7299.

For anyone wishing to read the Policies of each Party, please refer to websites as listed below:

Australian Democrats: <http://www.democrats.org.au>

Australian Greens: <http://greens.org.au>

Australian Labor Party: http://www.alp.org.au/policy/index.php#aged%care_disability_carers_&_social_inclusion

Australian Liberal Party: <http://www.liberal.org.au/about/ourpoliciesplans.php>

Carers Alliance: <http://www.carers.org.au/about.html>

Christian Democratic Party: <http://www.cdp.org.au/>

Family First Party: <http://www.familyfirst.org.au/familyfirst.php>

One Nation: <http://nswonenation.com.au/1nationpolicy/awintro.htm>

Pauline's United Australia Party: <http://www.paulinehanson.com.au/index.phpnav=policies>

Socialist Alliance: <http://www..socialist-alliance.org/page.php?page=204>

The Nationals: <http://www.nationals.org.au/About/Policies/default.asp>

What Women Want Party: <http://www.whatwomenwant.org.au/home/modules/content/index.php?id=4>

Australian Electoral Commission (for smaller Political Parties): <http://www.aec.gov.au/>

TCASP UPDATE - Meetings and Correspondence

27th September 2007: TCASP met with the Hon Lara Giddings MHA, Minister for Health & Human Services, to provide information on TCASP and to discuss issues faced by people living with acquired brain injury, their families, carers and service providers, in Tasmania. The Minister was advised TCASP will continue to lobby for ABI issues and that we seek a cooperative and positive partnership with Government.

17th October 2007: A letter was sent to Wendy Quinn (Director of Disability Services) seeking confirmation that legislative changes, currently under consideration to the Disability Services Act 1992 (Tas), will incorporate the inclusion of 'cognitive impairment' to the definition of disability. ABI service providers in Tasmania, and more recently TCASP, have been lobbying for this to occur for some time as currently acquired brain injury is not included in this act and is resulting in discrimination against people with ABI. As of the 16th November we had not received a reply from Ms Quinn to either the letter or follow up email.

Please email TCASP at enquiries@biat.org.au if you would like for further information