



National Seniors Australia

Tasmanian Election 2024

Priorities for the over 50s

Founded in 1976, National Seniors Australia (NSA) is the peak consumer body representing older Australians.

Through our dedicated research, advocacy and engagement activities, we work to advance the wellbeing of all older Australians, including seniors in Tasmania.

Key Recommendations

Transport



1. Introduce free public transport for seniors.

National Seniors Australia calls on all candidates and parties to follow the example of South Australia and extend free public transport to seniors in Tasmania.

Free public transport will reduce cost-of-living pressures and improve the mobility of older people. This is especially important for people who might otherwise find it difficult to access essential services.

When free bus travel for all commuters was offered between 28 March and 31 April 2022 bus patronage increased by 15% (in urban services alone).

An added benefit of the policy is that it helps to ease congestion and reduce transport emissions.

Concessions



2. Ensure state-based concessions and rebates for essential services are maintained at appropriate levels for older Tasmanians.

National Seniors Australia is urging all candidates and parties to be responsive to the current cost-of-living challenge by committing to adequate indexation of concessions for essential services.

We cannot have a situation in which the cost of essentials increase faster than concessions.

We are also calling for higher concession rates for those doing it tough. As [NSA research clearly shows](#), some seniors are struggling more than others and need targeted assistance.

This can be achieved by giving higher concession rates for pensioners with limited savings.



Health

3. **Improve emergency department waiting times so Tasmania meets the national targets set for emergency departments.**

National Seniors Australia is calling on all candidates and parties to commit to activities that address Emergency Department waiting times. While emergency wait times have improved, Tasmania is still one of the worst performing jurisdictions.

Improving emergency wait times can only occur with funding improvements to increase workforce capacity and by increasing the availability of alternative emergency care options, such as out-of-hours urgent care clinics.



Housing

4. **Expand the MyHome shared equity scheme to give older Tasmanians an opportunity to buy a home.**

National Seniors Australia is calling on all candidates and parties to support our call to adapt the existing MyHome shared equity scheme (run through Homes Tasmania) to give secure housing for older people.

The MyHome scheme is limited to people with access to a loan and restricted to people with limited savings (<\$113,100). This excludes older people who cannot get a loan.

A targeted scheme would allow people aged 60+ with savings of up to \$300,000 to co-invest in new age-friendly housing, with government providing the balance of the purchase cost. Participants would own a portion of the dwelling and pay rent to a community housing provider for the balance.

This would give older people secure tenure, while ensuring government could build more homes at less cost.



Representation

5. **Expand the role of a current Minister to include specific responsibility for seniors.**

National Seniors Australia is calling on all candidates and parties to support the appointment of a Minister for Seniors and Ageing.

This would bring Tasmania in line with other states and territories such as Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Northern Territory, and provide the necessary support and services for the state's growing older population.

The appointment of a Minister for Seniors and Ageing would better reflect the significant contribution older Tasmanians make to this state.

The current situation requires seniors to raise their concerns with multiple departments, which is both confusing and impractical.