



Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Arthritis & Osteoporosis Tasmania is a not for profit organisation established in 1976, to provide information and support to Tasmanians affected by arthritis, osteoporosis and related musculoskeletal conditions.

As a small organisation, we cannot achieve our vision alone. We need to work together with the Tasmanian Government, medical and allied health professionals, research institutions, other health NGOs and the wider community, to ensure our impact is as broad as possible.

Our Vision

All Tasmanians with arthritis, osteoporosis and related musculoskeletal conditions have access to the best possible information, support and services available.

Our Mission

To make a positive difference to the lives of all Tasmanians affected by arthritis, osteoporosis and related musculoskeletal conditions.

**Working together to improve the lives of all Tasmanians affected by
arthritis, osteoporosis and related musculoskeletal conditions**

Our Strategic Priorities



1

Information & Support

Why this is important

One in four Tasmanians (over 118,000 men, women and children) are affected by arthritis, osteoporosis and/or related musculoskeletal conditions. Symptoms such as pain, stiffness and fatigue can have a big impact on the daily lives of people and their families, yet few people are aware of simple measures that can help manage their symptoms and enable them to live well with arthritis.

What we will be doing

- Increasing public awareness of the signs and symptoms of arthritis and the importance of early diagnosis and treatment;
- Providing information, education and support for people to self-manage their condition;
- Offering accredited education programs to enhance and build health workforce capacity to manage people with arthritis; and
- Promoting healthy lifestyles and self-management strategies, including the benefits of exercise and physical therapies in the management of arthritis.

What this means for people with arthritis

Increased knowledge about arthritis and the positive steps that can be taken to manage symptoms, means people will be more confident in communicating with their healthcare team, and take a more active role in their treatment, leading to better health outcomes.



2

Working Together

Why this is important

As a small non-profit organisation, we are unable to manage alone the enormous task of supporting all Tasmanians living with arthritis, making collaboration and partnerships vital to achieving our mission.

What we will be doing

- Extending our networks across the government and non-government health sectors to facilitate greater knowledge of, and access to, our quality resources and programs;
- Working collaboratively with organisations and/or individuals across the primary and secondary health care sectors, to foster integrated and coordinated support services for people with arthritis;
- Finding innovative solutions (partnerships and/or collaborations) that will enable us to take our services to people with arthritis and their families living in rural / under-served areas of Tasmania; and
- Increasing our organisational capacity to deliver programs and services with the support of our highly valued and skilled staff and volunteers.

What this means for people with arthritis

Greater access to the information, programs and services needed to manage their condition.



3

Advocacy & Influence

Why this is important

Now is the time to take arthritis seriously. A substantial proportion of the cost and burden of arthritis can be reduced by adopting preventative strategies and improving care for people with arthritis. Yet evidence indicates that current management of arthritis falls well short of best practice.

What we will be doing

- Increasing awareness and understanding of the personal, social and economic burdens of arthritis amongst community members, health care providers and policy makers;
- Seeking to breakdown community misconceptions that arthritis is an old person's disease and an inevitable part of ageing about which nothing can be done;
- Promoting the importance of early diagnosis and treatment of arthritis; and
- Advocating for fair and appropriate access to primary, specialist and multidisciplinary care.

What this means for people with arthritis

- The prevalence and impact of arthritis is more widely understood. The patient journey across the continuum of care from wellness through to advanced disease is improved.



4

Effective Organisation

Why this is important

Arthritis & Osteoporosis Tasmania is the only organisation in Tasmania dedicated to providing programs and services to people living with arthritis, osteoporosis or related conditions. It is important that Arthritis & Osteoporosis Tasmania is well-governed, remains relevant, viable and sustainable.

What we will be doing

- Adopting a Results Based Accountability monitoring and reporting system for all our programs and services;
- Responding to changing needs and seizing opportunities when they arise;
- Promoting a positive culture towards volunteering and implement effective management systems to support volunteer involvement; and
- Adopting a system of good practice, review and continuous improvement.

What this means for people with arthritis

- When a family of a newly diagnosed child with JIA seeks information and support, an organisation with local knowledge of the Tasmanian health system and the community, will be there to respond.

1 in 4 Tasmanians suffer from arthritis



The Facts

- 1 in 4 Tasmanians (118,000 people) are affected by arthritis
- The number of Tasmanians with arthritis is projected to increase by 20.5% to 142,149 persons by 2050
- An estimated 44% of Tasmanian adults have three or more long term chronic health conditions.
- 1,595 knee replacements and 1,521 hip replacements were performed in Tasmania in 2016.
- In 2011 the burden of arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions was 20% higher than the national rate

Our Values

- We believe that people feel better when they have control of their own lives. Our services aim to help people self-manage their conditions through simple, practical steps.
- We understand the serious impact that arthritis can have on people living with arthritis and their families, and we offer our services with compassion and respect for each person's unique experience and situation.
- Making the decision to seek assistance can be difficult. We offer a friendly voice and face to people who contact us.
- We value and appreciate the knowledge and willing help offered by our volunteers, who are crucial to our work.
- We strive to offer our services state-wide, but where we can't, we work with local communities to provide services, and/or train other providers to provide them.
- We aim to make our services and programs accessible and easily available to everyone who needs them.
- Healthy relationships and partnerships underpin our work. We are committed to working productively with others to bring about the best possible services for people with arthritis and osteoporosis, their families and carers, and health professionals and practitioners.
- We offer high quality programs that meet current professional standards.
- We aim to provide services according to our financial capabilities ensuring optimum utilisation of available funds and sustainability of the organisation.