



## ARTICLE HOBART MERCURY 3/4/2014

NEW \$35 million palliative care package has been rolled out to allow more Tasmanians to die in their homes.

The new **Hospice**@Home program was launched yesterday with Federal Government funding from the Tasmanian Health Assistance Package. Delivered by The District Nurses, it will not only benefit patients and their families but also free up hospital beds.

Up to \$35.2 million will be spent over three years delivering 2000 community-based packages of palliative care from new offices in Launceston and Burnie and the Hobart office bolstered by more staff. The District Nurses have hired 15 staff so far and will continue to recruit statewide.

Assistant Minister for Health Fiona Nash said the program was the first of its type to deliver comprehensive around-the-clock home-based palliative care across a state.

**Hospice**@Home packages offer more control and choice of treatment for people with life-limiting illness or who are nearing the end of their lives. Ms Nash said the packages would improve access to palliative care services for people in rural and remote areas.

Packages include face-to-face visits and telephone advice/support which is accessible 24/7.

District Nurses chief executive Kim Macgowan said more families would now be supported at home with their loved ones at life's end.

**Hospice**@Home started a pilot program in December. It has 99 registered clients - 58 in the south, 24 in the North-West and 17 in the north. The Tasmanian Association of **Hospice** and Palliative Care will receive up to \$2.67 million to provide infrastructure services and the Department of Health and Human Services will get \$11 million in Commonwealth funding to support existing palliative care teams.