

5 August 2026

Dr Rosalie Woodruff
Leader of the Tasmanian Greens
Member for Franklin
Parliament House
Hobart TAS 7000

Via: [REDACTED]

Re: Consultation on draft *Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2026*.

Dear Dr Woodruff

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft *Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2026*.

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) is the voice of general practitioners (GPs) in Tasmania. As a national peak body representing over 47,000 members including almost 1,900 Tasmanians working in, or towards, a career as a specialist GP in approximately 200 GP clinics.

RACGP Tasmania supports all provisions of the draft *Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2026*. The proposed legislation appropriately prohibits harmful conversion practices while preserving access to legitimate, evidence-based healthcare. The Bill is consistent with contemporary clinical standards and supportive of the health, wellbeing and dignity of LGBTQIA+ Tasmanians.

General practitioners are often the first and most consistent point of contact within the health system. Patients commonly seek advice from their GP regarding sexual orientation, gender identity, mental health, family relationships and psychosocial wellbeing. Accordingly, RACGP Tasmania has a strong interest in ensuring any legislative framework both protects patients from harm and preserves clinicians' ability to provide high-quality, patient-centred care.

Prohibition of Harmful Practices

The College supports the prohibition of practices intended to change, suppress or eradicate a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. Such practices are inconsistent with contemporary evidence-based healthcare and may contribute to significant psychological distress and adverse health outcomes. RACGP Tasmania welcomes the clear statement of principles recognising that sexual orientation and gender identity are not conditions requiring treatment or correction.

Health Practitioner Exemption

The exemption for registered health practitioners is essential. General practitioners must retain the ability to undertake comprehensive assessment, discuss a patient's experiences, provide counselling, support informed decision-making, refer to specialist services where appropriate and facilitate identity exploration in a safe therapeutic environment. The wording of the exemption appropriately protects legitimate healthcare while ensuring conduct intended to change or suppress sexual orientation or gender identity remains prohibited.

Implications for General Practice

The Bill is likely to provide greater certainty regarding appropriate professional conduct. It reinforces that affirming, evidence-based care remains lawful and appropriate. The legislation may also strengthen trust among LGBTQIA+ patients and improve engagement with healthcare services. Some practitioners may seek additional guidance regarding documentation, professional obligations and the distinction between exploratory conversations and prohibited practices. RACGP Tasmania encourages the development of practical implementation resources for primary care settings.

Education and Implementation

The Anti-Discrimination Commissioner's proposed educational functions present an important opportunity for collaboration with professional colleges and healthcare organisations. Guidance should include clinical case studies, examples relevant to general practice, advice regarding record keeping, and information regarding

investigative and complaint processes. Educational materials should emphasise that patient-led exploration and evidence-based care are distinct from conversion practices.

Investigation and Compliance Framework

RACGP Tasmania supports the proposed civil response scheme and recognises the importance of investigation powers in addressing serious or systemic conduct. The College notes that healthcare matters should continue to be considered within the context of professional regulation, clinical judgement and existing ethical obligations. Clear guidance will assist practitioners in understanding their responsibilities under the Act.

Children and Young People

RACGP Tasmania strongly supports enhanced protections for children and young people. The recognition of conversion practices involving children as a form of child abuse reflects the significant risk of harm associated with such conduct. The framework appropriately balances protection from harm with access to supportive healthcare and family engagement.

Recommendations

1. Proceed with the Bill as drafted.
2. Develop implementation guidance for healthcare professionals.
3. Engage with RACGP Tasmania and other professional bodies in developing educational materials.
4. Provide case-based guidance clarifying the distinction between conversion practices and legitimate healthcare.
5. Monitor implementation outcomes through the statutory review process.

RACGP Tasmania supports the *Draft Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2026* in its entirety. The Bill establishes a balanced framework that addresses harmful conversion practices while protecting access to evidence-based healthcare. The proposed legislation will strengthen protections for vulnerable Tasmanians, support inclusive healthcare, and provide appropriate safeguards for general practitioners delivering patient-centred care.

Yours sincerely



Dr Toby Gardner (Tasmanian Chair)

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners