

Minister for Health
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Leader of Government Business in the House of Assembly



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Michele Newton
Secretary
Motor Neurone Disease Association of Tasmania
PO Box 379
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Dear Ms Newton,

Thank you for your correspondence regarding the recent departure of Dr Kurien Koshy, a specialist neurologist, from the Launceston General Hospital.

Dr Koshy has accepted an appointment interstate, which will provide opportunity to further his career as lead a highly specialised area and the Government wishes him well in the next stage of his career.

Like you, I consider it important that our community in Northern Tasmania have better access to specialist neurology services. I have made this explicit in our health reform agenda with funding to support more staff given the longstanding inequity in the North, which the Liberal Government is challenging.

On learning of Dr Koshy's decision to accept a job interstate, I asked the Tasmanian Health Service to immediately commence recruitment. I am advised that, while there has been long-standing difficulty attracting neurologists to regional and remote areas, the recruitment process is well underway.

Of course, until the process has concluded it is not possible to know if we will find suitable staff, but I have asked THS to employ two neurologists for the LGH, if there are sufficient qualified candidates, to provide outreach across North and North West Tasmania.

While this process is underway, specialist staff cover is being provided to ensure services to patients are not reduced. However, I must emphasise that it is a very important priority of this Government to recruit new full-time permanent staff to the LGH and across Tasmania.

Over the longer-term, the Government is working towards increasing neurology and a range of other services at the LGH, as part of the One Health System reforms, to improve access to better care for all Tasmanians.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Ferguson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and 'F'.

Michael Ferguson MP
Minister for Health