



Richmond Fellowship Tasmania (RFT) has provided mental health services to the Tasmanian Community for over 30 years. With the full roll out of the NDIS, RFT established a new wholly owned entity, Richmond Futures, to provide psychosocial (mental health) support services funded by the NDIS to the Tasmanian Community. RFT has continued to provide block funded state and federal funded programs.

Since commencing operation in October 2018, Richmond Futures has grown to support over 60 NDIS participants, opened two new Supported Independent Living Homes and employed over 30 new team members.

In April 2019, RFT's funder, the Mental Health and Alcohol Directorate, advised RFT it would receive a new funding contract commencing 1 July 2019 for its existing programs. One of the requirements of this contract is that over its term RFT transition some of its existing residential programs to NDIS funded Supported Independent Living (SIL) facilities.

In May 2019, RFT advised staff that the Mental Health and Alcohol Directorate contract and transition strategy identified two programs transition to the NDIS during the FY2019-2020.

RFT's Moonah program was identified as the first with a transition date of 1 November 2019 and the Glenorchy program the second program on 30 March 2020.

Both transitioning sites would be operated by Richmond Futures as part of their already existing SIL operations from the identified transition dates and in line with Richmond Futures purpose.

Richmond Futures funding source is based entirely on 'fee for service' such as the NDIS. It does not receive any state Government support. The overarching principle of the NDIS is choice and control for participants who receive funding through the scheme.

A comprehensive communications plan has been developed and in early July 2019 all staff at the Moonah and Glenorchy Programs were advised of the employment options available to them. Union delegates have been present both at group and individual meetings with employees.

RFT met with HACSU and ASU Organisers today, Wednesday 24 July to discuss the transition. During the meeting there was broad agreement from both parties about the NDIS and the differences it presents from traditional block funded services.

Richmond Fellowship Tasmania

64 Anglesea St
South Hobart, 7004
PO Box 8, South Hobart, 7004
T: 03 6228 3344
F: 03 6228 3300
E: admin@rftas.org.au

Richmond Futures

64 Anglesea St
South Hobart, 7004
PO Box 8, South Hobart, 7004
T: 03 6169 1188
E: admin@richmondfutures.com.au



All employees have been provided with Richmond Futures position descriptions, information regarding the transition process, a clear understanding of the employment options available to them and information about working within a SIL program. RFT has been open and transparent aiming to ensure employees know their options as early as possible. This allows employees the opportunity to make informed decisions which are right for them.

For employees considering redeployment within Richmond Futures SIL programs:

- Available roles are in line with Richmond Futures classifications and pay levels are above the NDIS price guide.
- All roles within Richmond Futures are fixed term as Participants' NDIS plans change at least annually, and it is important to have flexibility to deliver services that comply with individual NDIS plans which can increase and decrease with limited warning. This means that NDIS participants can change their service provision with limited notice.
- Fixed term contracts are industry standard across sectors operating within the NDIS due to the nature of the NDIS model.
- It should also be noted that all roles recruited within RFT over the past 18 months have been fixed term in line with short term funding contracts and so nothing has changed.
- All transitioning employees maintain their minimum hours and their entitlements if they chose to redeploy into a role within Richmond Futures.

To date redeployment opportunities have been offered within RFT, one employee has been made redundant and no employees have confirmed whether they will take up voluntary redundancies or redeployments to Richmond Futures.

Supported Independent Living

Over the past three months, Richmond Futures has opened two new Supported Independent Living homes. These houses have become home for nine Tasmanian's with psychosocial disability who previously had relied on the Tasmanian mental health service for residential supports.

The establishment of these homes has also created new full time and part time jobs for over ten Tasmanian's.

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Whilst NDIS is still bedding down, for many it is creating long term support options which have previously not been there or been solely reliant on the Tasmanian government to provide.

Participants now have choice and control. They can choose where they live, who they live with and what support they receive.

With the creation of these two homes, nine Participants are no longer wholly reliant on state funded services, meaning that other people can now access state funded residential supports, which otherwise would have been occupied.

More support for Tasmanian's experiencing mental illness is good for everyone.

For further enquiries, please contact Miriam Moreton, Chief Executive Officer, 03 6228 3344

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