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Welcome to a Special Edition of our newsletter.

We hope everyone is keeping safe and well and complying with the rules.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on 21 May, 2020 commencing at 10.30 am.

The meeting will be held via video conference using Zoom. All members can thus attend using your mobile phone, tablet, or computer, from the comfort of the lounge room or sitting in a tractor.

AGENDA

1. Open Meeting
2. Apologies
3. Confirmation of Minutes of previous Meeting – 28th July, 2019
4. President's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Approval of Committee Allowances Policy
7. Approval of Allowance for Vice-President and back-payment
8. Audited Financial Report for the period 1st January to 31st December 2019
9. Auditor's Report for 2019
10. Appointment of Auditor for 2021
11. Close of Meeting

If you want to attend, please send us an email advising that you wish to log-in to the AGM and we will send you the necessary link and instructions on how to join the video conference.

If you cannot attend but would like someone to do so on your behalf, please complete and return the attached proxy form at least 24 hours before the scheduled meeting.

HELP US GROW

We are launching a new competition for members. Whoever refers the most new members by 30 November, 2020 will win a dozen bottles of premium Tasmanian Wines.

Details are set out in the attached flyer.

AGFEST IN THE CLOUD

Agfest in the Cloud has been a huge success and we congratulate the Agfest Committee.

Make sure you visit Agfest in the Cloud and check out the information and videos for Primary Employers Tasmania.

Don't forget, new members of Primary Employers Tasmania who sign up during Agfest in the Cloud will go in the draw to win a case of wine from the celebrated Stefano Lubiana Wines

COVID-19

Thank you to the Mercury Newspaper for this article.

**Talking Point: Upset, irritable, down?
Doctors get it and we've got your back.**

Patients worry they are burdening their doctors, but we want their call, says Elizabeth Lord

"I feel a bit guilty ringing up about this," a patient admitted to me the other day at the end of her telephone appointment.

We were talking about her mental health.

Despite all her hard work, she was struggling to get on top of her feelings of anxiety and low mood, and she needed some help. But in the middle of a global pandemic, she felt she shouldn't really be bothering her doctor about her own problems.

As a GP, it made me reflect on how many other people in our community may be feeling the same way.

In this crisis, we look around and see people we know who have lost their jobs, had to close their businesses, have been unable to attend the funeral of a loved one, or who are separated from all of their family and friends.

We look around and think, there are many other people worse off than ourselves.

We also don't want to be a burden on the healthcare system, assuming that doctors, nurses and other health care workers are all currently caught up with far more urgent matters.

But this is exactly the time to be talking to your GP.

Tasmanians have shown great resilience and strength in adapting to the biggest changes the majority of us have ever seen in our lifetimes.

So much has changed in such a short space of time.

At the moment, we're in survival mode – adjusting to working from home, coping with sudden unemployment, figuring out how to educate our children at home, all without the usual support from our family and our friends. But, as our Premier Peter Gutwein has said, we have a long road ahead. Life is not going to return to normal for a long time, if ever.

And while there will be positive changes and new opportunities to come from this pandemic, for many of us, things will be very hard for a long time.

I know that many of my GP colleagues are worried about a second wave of mental health issues in our community as our changed way of life tests us all. We will all go through periods during this time of feeling upset, worried, overwhelmed, stressed, irritable and low.

We will wish for it all to be over and life to go back to normal, and grieve for lost plans of travel, family gatherings and job opportunities. This is a completely normal response.

However, for many of us, these feelings will be hard to shake, and will cause significant distress.

Recent news stories have reported large increases to mental health services such as Lifeline and Beyond Blue.

For people with pre-existing mental health issues, the difficulty and uncertainty of this time may cause a significant deterioration in their psychological wellbeing.

For others, this will be the first time they experience mental health issues such as anxiety and depression, triggered by things such as unemployment, severe financial stress and social isolation.

It might seem surprising, but psychological issues such as anxiety and depression are the most common reason people turn up to see their GP. Every week, thousands of Australians talk to their doctor about how they are feeling.

As GPs, we offer advice about people's diets and exercise habits, organise referrals for people to see psychologists and start medications, or simply just listen to what is going on in our patients' lives.

The majority of GP appointments are now being done by telehealth, either over the phone or via video conferences. It may seem a bit strange talking about mental health issues on

the phone rather than face to face, but across the state GPs are still there on the end of the line to provide non-judgmental listening and help.

In recent years, Australia as a society has done a great job in breaking down the stigma of seeking help for mental health problems. We are far more comfortable now in acknowledging these issues as legitimate health concerns.

A healthy and resilient community is made up of healthy and resilient individuals.

In the uncertain months ahead, we will all be affected by different things, both large and small.

The important thing to remember is that now, more than ever, everyone's mental health still matters.

Dr Elizabeth Lord practises with General Practice Plus, a group of doctors' surgeries in South Hobart, Kingston, Sandy Bay and New Town.

2020 MEMBERSHIP

If you haven't yet re-joined you can do so by accessing the online portal (payment by Visa or MasterCard), or if you wish to pay by direct debit or cheque, please complete the attached membership form and return it and proof of payment to the office, either by email (pet@primaryemployers.com.au), or post (PO Box 3014 Launceston, 7250).

OFFICE HOURS

Though the office is currently unattended we are still available to assist with all your workplace relations enquiries. Andrew can be contacted on 0407 200 909.

PRIMARY EMPLOYERS TASMANIA WEBSITE

Have you visited our new website yet? There is lots of new information and links to help you in your business.

We will continue to add to the site to make it a one-stop spot to meet your needs as a member.

To access the new website you can click on the link below:
www.primaryemployers.com.au

KEEP UP TO DATE

Don't forget to Follow us on Facebook
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Felicity Richards, President



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