Our public health system is under threat from savage cuts and a privatisation agenda.

Medicare needs you to act now, or we could lose it forever.

YOU ARE INVITED TO A MEETING TO

save medicare and protect public health

ALL WELCOME

Friday 3 June • 12.30pm
Youth Arts & Recreation Centre
44 Collins Street, Hobart

AUTHORISED BY STEVE WALSH, SECRETARY UNIONS TASMANIA
The Turnbull Government cut $650 million from Medicare in its half-year Budget review. This includes cuts to Medicare for pathology tests and scans including MRI, X-Rays, CAT scans and mammograms:

- this will affect patients being diagnosed and treated for cancer and other serious health conditions;
- patients will be forced to fork out thousands of dollars upfront, and face higher out of pocket costs, for these tests;
- these cuts drive down bulk-billing, drive up out of pocket costs, deter people from getting crucial scans and tests.

“These measures are simply resurrecting a part of the Government’s original ill-fated co-payment proposal from the 2014 Budget. It is yet another co-payment by stealth. The AMA strongly opposes the measures.” – Australian Medical Association – Brian Owler

The president of the Royal College of Pathologists Australasia, Michael Harrison, said new co-payment fees could cause some patients to not have tests done.

“This could have untold effects across healthcare, including: delaying the effective early diagnosis of cancer leading to premature deaths; compromising the effective treatment of diabetes and chronic diseases; and threatening the services of rural pathology.” – Royal College of Pathologists – Michael Harrison

GPs have not had an increase in the Medicare Rebate they receive since 2013 — and the Turnbull Government decided in its May Budget to extend the freeze till 2018. How would you feel if your pay was frozen for five years? GPs say the freeze will force them to raise fees. This will mean many GPs who bulk-bill will start charging fees, and many GPs who already charge fees will charge more. It’s a GP Tax by stealth, and threatens the future of bulk-billing.

The Abbott-Turnbull Government in Canberra has cut $57 billion of funding from our hospitals which are already under pressure:

- these cuts affect every hospital in every state and territory.
- this will have a real impact on patients with increasing emergency waiting times, longer waits for elective surgery, and fewer hospital beds.
- state premiers, including Liberals, warn the cuts are unsustainable and simply amount to a massive cost shift onto patients, and the states.

The Government has tried to distance itself from this policy, but:

- this legislation remains before the parliament right now, and if the Senate changes, it will pass;
- the prescription price increases were reconfirmed in the mid-year Budget review handed down by Mr Turnbull;
- The independent Parliamentary Budget Office has confirmed this legislation is still before the parliament. It remains government policy.

All Australians should be able to access healthcare when and where they need it. But the Turnbull Government has already cut billions from Medicare and wants to privatise Medicare payments, putting patient records and thousands of jobs at risk. Privatising Medicare will be the end of Medicare as we know it — nobody wants to head down the same path as America when it comes to our health system.

Attend the meeting at the Youth Arts & Recreation Centre on Friday 3 June 2016 at 12.30pm. Because if you don’t stand up to protect Medicare, who will?