

# Neurologists secured for state's North

BY JESSICA WILLARD

A SECOND full-time permanent neurologist has been secured for the Launceston General Hospital, in what Health Minister Michael Ferguson has called a historic win for Northern Tasmania.

A consultant stroke neurologist at Melbourne's Northern and Austin hospitals, Tasmanian Dr Matt Lee-Archer is expected to commence his position at LGH in the new year.

He will join Dr Aaron De Souza, a former consultant neurologist at the Royal Cornwall Hospital, who formally accepted the position in March.

Dr De Souza recently made the move to Tasmania from the UK with his family, commencing his appointment with the Tasmanian Health Service this week.

However, it could be up to 12 months before he commences his position at the LGH, while he undergoes a period of supervision at the Royal Hobart Hospital.

Mr Ferguson said the new appointments represented a significant boost to health services at the LGH.

"The recruitment of two neurologists at the LGH comes after decades of neurology drought in the North, having between zero and one practitioner," he said.

"It means access to services for North and North-West patients will be massively improved as these neurologists will be able to function as a unit, rather than sole practitioners.



**SECURED:** Health Minister Michael Ferguson has announced the appointment of a second full-time neurologist for Launceston General Hospital.

"It also follows the recruitment of two endocrinologists at the LGH, after a decade-long drought for full-time specialists in this important area.

"We're winning in the attraction of much needed specialties coming to Launceston."

With a passion for stroke medicine, including acute treatment, rehabilitation and prevention, Mr Ferguson said Dr Lee-Archer would fill a longstanding specialist service gap in what was an "extremely tough recruiting subspecialty".

The state's North and North-West has been without a full-time neurologist since the departure of Dr Kurien Koshy in June last year, after more than six years in the role.

Dr Koshy previously told *The Examiner* his cries for help had been ignored by the state government, including requests to expand services to help balance increasing workloads.

The Tasmanian Health Service made written offers for neurologist positions at the LGH in November last year.