

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO THE SAFETY AND QUALITY OF HEALTH**

**SERVICES PROVIDED BY NORTHERN BEACHES HOSPITAL**

**Hearing – 17/10/2025**

**Questions on Notice**

**QUESTION 1 – Page 18**

**Mr CLAYTON BARR:** I am really sorry, team and Chair, but there is a lot to unpack. Can I go to the question of JMOs and the provision of JMOs as part of the sharing arrangement? The submission from the Northern Beaches Hospital Medical Advisory Committee is that, already this year, the Hornsby hospital JMO network have identified for NBH that they will be unable to supply four out of the 16 JMO posts for the remainder of this year. That's not just a sick day. That's not just occasionally, "We can't get the numbers." This is the public system saying, "We can't provide you what we're supposed to provide you in a long-term period." Are you aware of that, and is that okay?

**ANTHONY SCHEMBRI:** I have met on a number of occasions with the medical staff council, who have raised concerns with me directly around the allocation of JMOs and a concern that there was a disproportionate preference to district hospitals above Northern Beaches. When I became aware of that, I instructed our JMO unit and our executive medical director to conduct a review, and they found that there was no disadvantage applied to Northern Beaches, or no preference applied to Hornsby or Ryde or North Shore. There was a proportional allocation of JMOs to Northern Beaches. Unfortunately, and particularly during the later period of the calendar year, there are a number of vacancies in JMOs for a number of reasons. It's not unique to Northern Sydney. But we worked very hard to ensure that that allocation is fair and reasonable to Northern Beaches.

**Mr CLAYTON BARR:** The last sentence of that paragraph says, "Meanwhile, all JMO posts at Hornsby Hospital are completely filled."

**ANTHONY SCHEMBRI:** I would have to take that on notice. I'm not sure.

**Mr CLAYTON BARR:** It's in the submission. I can tell you it's 5.

**ANSWER**

Network 6 comprises the training facilities; Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital (HKH), Northern Beaches Hospital (NBH), Mona Vale Hospital (MVH), and Sydney Adventist Hospital (the San), Sydney Children's Hospital (SCH) and Mudgee General Practice (Rural rotation). Junior Medical Officers (JMOs) comprise interns and Resident Medical Officers (RMOs).

Allocation of interns is undertaken by the Health Education and Training Institute (HETI), and recruitment of RMOs for the Network is coordinated by HKH. Network 6 is funded for a total of 82 JMO training positions comprising Interns and RMOs. The allocation process is designed to facilitate a fair and equitable distribution of JMOs and to fill any vacancies across the Network.

In the 2025 Clinical Year, in agreement with NBH, Network 6 allocated 33 JMOs to NBH, 40 to HKH, and 3 to MVH.

Prior to the commencement of the 2025 Clinical Year, there were RMO vacancies across Network 6. All hospitals within the Network were notified of these shortages and were encouraged to complete additional rounds of recruitment independently to fill any anticipated vacancies, HKH completed an additional 5 rounds of recruitment. However, we were unable to fill all of the vacancies. If further vacancies arise during the year, each hospital is responsible for directly recruiting to these positions.

## QUESTION 2 – Page 20

**Dr DAVID SALIBA:** This is a very important point: Who recommended all of this? You made a comment, and I typed it down as you said it. You said that the PPP's purpose was to bring, basically, a level at that hospital that will be able to merge those two other smaller hospitals at level 5 care. Who said, "All right, we've got an established public hospital process that can do that, but we're instead going to do the PPP?"

**ANTHONY SCHEMBRI:** It was the government of the day.

**Dr DAVID SALIBA:** So it was the Government. It wasn't a recommendation from Health.

**ANTHONY SCHEMBRI:** I would have to take that on notice. I wasn't there at the time, but that's my understanding.

## ANSWER

I refer the Committee to the Legislative Assembly Hansard dated 2 May 2013

[Legislative Assembly Hansard - 02 May 2013](#)

## QUESTION 3 – Page 21

**The CHAIR:** Could I also jump in around the staffing levels? Given the rollout of safe staffing levels at public emergency departments, could you compare for us the nurse staffing levels at, say, Royal North Shore Hospital and Northern Beaches Hospital?

**ANTHONY SCHEMBRI:** As part of the transition assessment team that we are working with – the taskforce – we have identified that there is a different staffing ratio in the emergency department at Northern Beaches when compared with a peer hospital. I am happy to take that on notice with further detail.

## ANSWER

Safe Staffing Levels (SSL) was implemented at Royal North Shore Hospital (RNSH) ED in mid-2024 and HKH ED in early-2025.

Assessment for SSL will need to be undertaken at NBHA. SSL assessment includes the review of multiple data points, some of which require access to historical data and may take some time to establish reliability, a site visit to the facility by the SSL team, and the calculation of any potential change in staffing requirements as determined by the SSL methodology.