

**Submission
No 29**

**THE SAFETY AND QUALITY OF HEALTH SERVICES PROVIDED BY NORTHERN
BEACHES HOSPITAL**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

The northern beaches public-private hospital model has created a two-tiered emergency health care system. There are in this hospital both public and private wards that treat the same condition. Mental health is one example. There is a private ward as well as public.

The differences are apparent: more experienced doctors are assigned to the private ward, which has higher nurse to patient ratios, better food and overall care. Patients in the private ward are treated with a dignity and respect not afforded to public patients.

A short walk on the same floor, lies the public ward. Patients are fed a basic diet compared to private patients, have to wait longer to see a doctor and have less nursing staff to attend to them. It is one example of this hospital's two-tiered health system, where your credit card determines your level of care. Not your medicare card.

At northern beaches hospital emergency department, you will find committed decent staff straining under a healthcare model that prioritises profits over people.

My most recent stay I attended via ambulance suffering flu and asthma last year. The nurses and doctors treating me shared their views about how the hospital was being run. Universally, they spoke of a hospital in urgent need of receiving adequate funds and staff to operate at a level expected in NSW public hospitals of similar size. They wanted the hospital to be made public as they had lost faith in the public-private profit based model.

Since this hospital opened, ambulances on the northern beaches must take you to the healthscope private hospital. Not a public one like Royal North Shore. Residents like myself are therefore forced into the private healthcare system if we get sick or injured.

Since Manly hospital closed and Mona Vale shut its emergency department, I have had private health insurance for my family as I do not want to be on the wrong end of a two-tiered health system in the event of a health crisis. This is a significant spend for me, a single parent on a disability pension. But it is one I continue to pay as I do not trust a private hospital to care for me adequately without it.

The NSW Government should make northern beaches hospital public as soon as it can.