

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

**Organisation:** Office of the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People

**Date Received:** 19 May 2025

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Mr Jason Yat-Sen Li, MP  
Chair, Public Accounts Committee  
NSW Parliament

Via email: [PublicAccountsCommittee.PAC@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:PublicAccountsCommittee.PAC@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Chair,

As the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People, I commend the committee for establishing the inquiry into the safety and quality of health services provided by Northern Beaches Hospital and welcome the opportunity to provide insights that I have heard from children and young people regarding their experiences accessing the health system.

Established under the *Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014*, the Advocate for Children and Young People is an independent statutory appointment overseen by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Children and Young People. The Advocate promotes the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people aged 0-24 years and their participation in decisions that affect their lives. The Act requires the Advocate to 'give priority to the interests and needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people' and to 'focus on systemic issues affecting children and young people.' Further information about the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People's (ACYP) work can be found at: [www.acyp.nsw.gov.au](http://www.acyp.nsw.gov.au).

Children and young people are the experts in their own lives and experiences. ACYP recognises and supports the work being done across government to listen to children and young people with diverse lived experience when developing policies, programs and services. This submission shares key messages and themes from these children and young people, reflecting what they have shared with the Advocate and the work of ACYP in supporting them. These insights are sourced from the [NSW Strategic Plan for Children and Young People 2022-2024](#), as well as from the Youth Advisory Council.

A member of the Youth Advisory Council from the Northern Beaches community has shared that both themselves and other young people in the area are experiencing long wait times and a lack of available beds during visits to Northern Beaches Hospital.

Given that the experiences of vulnerable patients and children is a key focus of this inquiry, I encourage the Committee to consider direct consultation with children and young people in the Northern Sydney Local Health District to hear their experiences of the Northern Beaches Hospital. ACYP would be happy to support the Committee in engaging with young people.

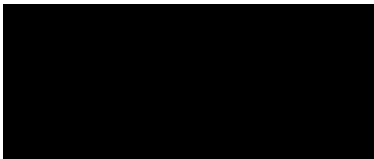
During the consultations with children and young people to inform the Strategic Plan, young people raised a need for greater understanding of the healthcare system to support them to be able to engage with services. In particular, young people were concerned that their doctors were not able to engage with them or communicate well with young people. Children and young people raised that this had a flow on effect for their ability to access the help they need.

Just 66 per cent of children and young people rated their overall physical health as good, while only 55 per cent viewed their mental health as good. Those most likely to be positive about their physical health were 10-13 year olds (83 per cent), those who viewed themselves as highly resilient (77 per cent), and those who felt financially secure (66 per cent). Those most likely to be negative about their physical health were those who had contact with the justice system (35 per cent), those who felt financially insecure (27 per cent), and those identifying as LGBTQIA+ (26 per cent).

Those most likely to be positive about their mental health were also 10-13 year olds (79 per cent), those who viewed themselves as highly resilient (68 per cent), and those who felt financially secure (56 per cent). Those most likely to be negative about their mental health were those identifying as LGBTQIA+ (50 per cent), those with disability (40 per cent), and those who had contact with the justice system (39 per cent).

Thank you once more for the opportunity to provide a submission to this inquiry. ACYP would be happy to work with the committee to explore these topics further, and trust that this information has been of some assistance. Should you wish to discuss these matters, please do not hesitate to contact my office via: [acyp@acyp.nsw.gov.au](mailto:acyp@acyp.nsw.gov.au) or ph: (02) 9248 0970.

Yours Sincerely,



**Zoë Robinson**

Advocate for Children and Young People

Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People