



9 December 2019

The Hon Greg Donnelly MLC  
Chair Portfolio Committee Number 2 – Health  
Parliament of NSW  
Macquarie St  
SYDNEY 2000

By email: [portfoliocommittee2@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:portfoliocommittee2@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Mr Donnelly,

**Re: Questions on Notice & Supplementary Questions**

Thank you once again for the opportunity to participate in the Committee's inquiry into the Operation and Management of the Northern Beaches Hospital.

At the recent hearing on November 5, 2019, witnesses appearing for Northern Beaches Hospital and Healthscope committed to provide a number of answers to Questions on Notice posed by the Committee.

I also received your request for Supplementary Questions and now provide the following answers for the Committee's information.

I trust the information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

[Signed]

Andrew Newton

**Chief Executive Officer  
Northern Beaches Hospital**

**Answers to Questions on Notice**

**1. What were the other quality KPIs that you were fined for not providing?**

The hospital incurred abatements for not meeting the following quality KPIs in 2018-19:

- Percentage of complaints (complaints management) resolved within 35 days
- Total number of staphylococcus aureus BSI, represented as total number per 10,000 occupied bed days
- Number of women who give birth vaginally who receive a blood transfusion during the same admission

**2. What else are you still working on other than discharge summaries that is not resolved 12 months after the hospital opened?**

Northern Beaches Hospital is continually working to improve patient care and quality. Accreditation is an important part of our ongoing quality program to maintain high quality patient care.

NBH is accredited against the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, a mandatory set of standards established by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care for all public and private hospitals.

New hospitals such as NBH are required to undergo interim accreditation within two weeks of opening, and a revisit within 12 months. Recently, the hospital underwent the survey for accreditation by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards.

The surveyors have given the hospital a favourable report with recommendation for three-year accreditation. Notice of accreditation is expected in February 2020.

**3. With respect to the first submission of Healthscope on page eight it listed the departments of the Northern Beaches Hospital. Has that list been extended and updated because of the additional departments? If so, can you take on notice and provide the committee with an updated list? I am interested particularly in palliative care if that is shaping into a department within the hospital. I am using "department" as the language to describe it as a generic term. I am not quite sure whether it is specifically a department. With respect to oncology, I note that that is not specifically listed. Has that now got the status of a department?**

Northern Beaches Hospital offers services through the following departments:

Aged Care	General Medicine	Orthopaedics
Anaesthetics	General Surgery	Ophthalmology
Cancer Care	Infectious Diseases	Pathology
Cardiac Care	Intensive Care Services	Plastics
Children's Health	Medical Imaging	Surgeries
Clinical Governance	Medical Subspecialties	Vascular
Emergency Department	Mental Health	Women's Health
Endocrinology	Nephrology	Urology
ENT	Neurology	
Gastroenterology	Neurosurgery	

Through the Cancer Care/Oncology Department, NBH Cancer Care services include:

- The Oncology and Infusion Centre - a 12-chair facility, operating week days, for the delivery of:
  - intravenous infusions, subcutaneous and oral cancer treatments (outpatient chemotherapy, immunotherapy and non-cytotoxic cancer treatments such as targeted therapies and hormonal treatments)
  - non-malignant haematology therapies (e.g: blood transfusions, iron infusions)

- medical infusions (for e.g. for gastroenterology, immunology, neurology, respiratory specialities)
- venesection (e.g. for the treatment of haemochromatosis)
- Radiation oncology - Radiation oncology specialists from nearby treatment centres have visiting rights to Northern Beaches Hospital and provide a regular outpatient clinic.
- Inpatient care – a comprehensive range of services are provided, including cancer surgery, and inpatient care is provided by a highly-experienced clinical team led by specialist oncologists and haematologists, with a palliative care and radiation oncology consulting service. Specialists are supported by oncology and palliative care clinical nurse consultants, a McGrath breast nurse, specialised nursing staff, and Allied Health professionals.

Both inpatient and community palliative care services for the northern beaches are provided at a Local Health District (LHD) level. NBH works collaboratively with all of the LHD's specialist palliative care providers to support our local community. These include:

- Royal North Shore Hospital Palliative Care Department
- Neringah Hospital
- Greenwich Hospital
- Community palliative care services

We look forward to working with Mona Vale Palliative Care Unit when it opens in 2020.

- 4. Is there flexibility within the deed to take on more outpatient services? Is there capacity within the deed for you through negotiation to take on additional outpatient services? I refer to points three and four on page two of the submission about specific medical services which are presently not available out of the Northern Beaches Hospital. If required, you may take this question on notice. With respect to the two dealt with in points three and four, will you find out whether they could be matters to negotiate with NSW Health in regards to the capacity to provide those services through negotiation and consistent with the provisions within the deed?**

Before each operating year commences, the government provides Healthscope with an Annual Notice for the pending operating year, which sets out the type and volume of services (including outpatient services) that will be purchased in the operating year.

Healthscope may also provide additional services upon the request of the State.

- 5. Earlier in evidence you talked about fines being imposed on the hospital. I would like to know when were those fines imposed, were they in October/November last year? It is the chronology of them and you will check to see if there is an issue of commercial in confidence about revealing the size of those fines. If there is no commercial in confidence I think the request is for the value of those particular fines.**

Further to our response to question 1 above, the chronology of abatements is as follows:

- Percentage of complaints (complaints management) resolved within 35 days: December 2018 and March 2019
- Total number of staphylococcus aureus BSI, represented as total number per 10,000 occupied bed days: December 2018 - February 2019.
- Number of women who give birth vaginally who receive a blood transfusion during the same admission: June 2019.

The quantum of the abatements is commercial in confidence.

### **Supplementary Questions**

- 1. In Mr Newton's opening statement, he stated that the Hospital is not currently contracted to provide coronary angiography services to public patients, but that the hospital is able to treat patients who present with cardiac symptoms and require urgent assistance. Please provide more detail on:**
  - a) the different coronary services that are provided to public versus private patients at Northern Beaches Hospital**
  - b) the process of decision making as to whether public patients requiring urgent assistance receive it on site.**

Northern Beaches Hospital is a Public Private Partnership with the NSLHD through which public and private health services are provided to the local community. The services provided by NBH to public patients are determined by the LHD and then purchased from Healthscope to meet the needs of the community.

The LHD does not currently contract coronary angiography services from NBH. In most circumstances, these are provided at Royal North Shore Hospital (RNSH) as was the case prior to the opening of NBH. Public inpatients at NBH who require urgent interventional cardiology (coronary angiography) services receive their treatment at NBH. If a patient presents to NBH, requires urgent interventional cardiology (coronary angiography) and it is not appropriate to transfer them to another hospital, treatment is provided at NBH. This is based on clinical need.

Healthscope has had discussions with the NSLHD in relation to extending coronary angiography services to public patients.

- 2. The committee has noted Mr Newton's distinguished career in the public hospital system.**

- a) In light of this background, what changes is he ushering in at Northern Beaches Hospital?**

Mr Newton commenced as CEO on 2 September 2019. The hospital had been in operation for 10 months at this time. Mr Newton spent the early period of his appointment consulting with patients, staff, doctors, and members of the community, and is now actively working to:

- Engage with patients and their carers to ensure they have a positive experience at the hospital and to ensure timely resolution where this has not been the case
- Continue engagement with staff, doctors appointed to the hospital, and local GPs via their representative organisations.

- b) How are staff being supported to adapt to the cultural differences between the public and private hospital systems?**

- All staff undergo Healthscope mandatory training each year
- The executive team and managers meet with staff on a regular basis to ensure the culture is one of customer service wrapped around the patient and their families
- All staff are educated that the priority is timely and quality care for all patients who choose to, or need to, use the hospital
- The CEO has observed the hospital now has 'one culture' and the staff have adopted the notion of one hospital. No longer is it seen that there are discrete groups of staff from Manly, Mona Vale, and newly-appointed into Healthscope.

**3. Numerous inquiry participants voiced concerns about patient safety. What measures does the hospital have in place to ensure patient safety?**

NBH is providing an excellent standard of care to the local community, which is verified through government and other independent industry performance data. While patient and staff satisfaction measures were impacted by issues that occurred during the initial weeks following commencement of hospital operations, these have substantially improved over the past year.

The hospital recently completed the national accreditation survey by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS) in the following categories:

- Clinical Governance
- Partnering with Consumers
- Preventing and Controlling Healthcare-Associated Infection
- Medication Safety
- Comprehensive Care
- Communicating for Safety
- Blood Management
- Recognising and Responding to Acute Deterioration

The hospital received a favourable report and was recommended for accreditation for a 3-year period.

**4. A number of submission authors have raised concerns about road access to the hospital. What representations have you made to road authorities to improve physical access to the precinct?**

Northern Beaches Hospital is in regular contact with Northern Beaches Council and the Roads and Maritime Service to help to improve road and public transport access to the hospital. The Northern Beaches Hospital Road Connectivity and Network Enhancement Manager works closely with the hospital to ensure timely access to the hospital during the local road works currently underway.

**5. There was some discussion in the 5 November hearing of the ability to renegotiate elements of the deed of between Healthscope and the LHD, notably in respect of coronary angiography and outpatient services, with questions taken on notice on this issue. Are there any other aspects of the deed that Healthscope is currently seeking or intends to renegotiate?**

Before each operating year commences, the Government provides Healthscope with an 'Annual Notice' for the pending operating year, which sets out the type and volume of services that will be purchased in the operating year. Healthscope may also provide additional services upon the request of the State.

As mentioned above, Healthscope has had discussions with the NSLHD in relation to extending coronary angiography services to public patients.