

**Submission**

**No 19**

## **INQUIRY INTO THE ROYAL NORTH SHORE HOSPITAL**

**Name:** Mr Wal Coskerie

**Date Received:** 7/11/2007

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## **L W Coskerie**

Australian Defence Medal, Anniversary of National Service Medal, New South Wales Service Medallion  
BE (NSW), MEngSc (Syd), DipStats (NE), ASTC, LMIEEE, MIEAust,

Joint Select Committee on the Royal North Shore Hospital

### **SUBMISSION**

[royalnorthshorecommittee@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:royalnorthshorecommittee@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

5<sup>th</sup> November 2007

I have enclosed copies of letters that I have written to health ministers in recent times.

My main message is that I received excellent treatment at a number of hospitals including Royal North Shore and North Shore private.

I believe that the greatest need in this state is for a Health Minister to combine the qualities of practical intelligence, empathy and compassion. Unfortunately the present minister lacks all three qualities.

Wal Coskerie

3<sup>rd</sup> March 2006

I had little experience of hospitals as I had not been admitted to a hospital for 60 years until I had a heart attack. I wanted to place on record the excellent help that I received at all stages from staff of all classifications. I also wish to thank the doctor at Manly hospital who kept my family fully informed as to my progress.

My initial action was to write to the Minister for Health, however the letter was not acknowledged or answered so I have attempted to distribute my message more widely. A copy of the letter to the minister follows.

Wal Coskerie

**L W Coskerie**

ANSM, NSWSM, BE (NSW), MENGSC (SYD)  
DIPSTATS (NE), ASTC, LMIEEE, MIEAUST, CPENG

Telephone

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1<sup>st</sup> February 2006

The Hon. John Hatzistergos, BEc LL.M. MLC  
Minister for Health  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear John

**Excellent Health care following a Heart Attack**

I am 70 years of age and apart from having my tonsils out in 1945 I had never been to hospital. On the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2005 I had a heart attack early in the morning and following swift action by my son an ambulance responded quickly and the ambulance officers stabilized me and took me to Manly Hospital where I received further treatment. Later I was taken to Royal North Shore Hospital where an angiogram was taken by Professor Helge Rasmussen, FRACP, DMSc and two days later on Saturday night from 7pm to 1am Sunday morning I received Cardiac Artery Bypass Grafts (triple bypass) from Dr Manu Mathur, MB, BS, FRACS. I was moved to North Shore Private Hospital for a week and later I spent a week at the Peninsular Private Hospital for rehabilitation as recommended by my wife and sister and with the concurrence of Dr Mathur.

After returning home I then reported to Manly Hospital for further rehabilitation. During cardiac rehab I was about the oldest person in the group. The patients had either had Cardiac Artery Bypass Grafts or stents inserted into cardiac arteries. Many of the patients in Rehab complained of suffering from depression. As these patients were mainly in their 50's perhaps the shock of having a heart problem had a greater effect on them than on somebody like me, a 70 year old with inherited heart disease. Most of the cardiac patients I believe needed psychological support and as I only needed exercise which I could manage myself I did not need to continue with the program.

My purpose in writing to you is to comment on the excellent service that I received. The Ambulance officers were most efficient and quickly had my symptoms under control. Then the emergency staff at Manly took over and by morning I was in a position to travel by ambulance to RNSH. The Angiogram detected three blocked arteries (99%, 90% 100%) and surgery was quickly arranged. All the nursing staff and medical staff were efficient and of good humor, which was very relaxing for the patients. After surgery the nurses were excellent and treated the patients with care and again I was impressed with their professional attitude as well as their ability to enjoy their work and their light hearted approach to the patients. The physiotherapists were also very good and the Dietician enjoyed changing my food choices to items that I should eat rather than items that I fancied. I have the greatest respect for the staff and their professional and caring attitude to the patients. No doubt the efficient organization of the hospital also depends upon a competent administrative and managerial staff even though the patients do not directly observe this aspect of hospital work.

I trust that you will look after the staff especially when new IR laws are introduced. I saw a letter to the Manly Daily from a nurse who was worried that her wages may be reduced when weekend penalty rates are eliminated. It should not be too difficult to restructure wages in such a way that the medical and nursing staffs are not disadvantaged. There are good reasons for paying penalty rates because of the difficult working hours. I was picked up about 3.00am and I was operated on from Saturday evening. Periods when most people are either asleep or enjoying social activities.

I understand some of the problems associated with shift work. When I was young I worked in the control room of a power station where I worked continuous rotating shift work. Shifts covered night shift from 11pm to 7am, day shift from 7am to 3pm and afternoon shift from 3pm to 11pm. I worked three out of 4 weekends on different shifts. Some people have difficulty sleeping in the day and shift work does disturb some aspects of social life and also some aspects of team sports.

Unfortunately people are quick to complain but slow to praise. I have tried to show how lucky we are in this state to have such a group of dedicated health care workers who can combine efficiency with dedication and still maintain an enthusiastic and light hearted approach to their work.

Yours sincerely

Leigh Coskerie (Wal Coskerie )

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1<sup>st</sup> October 2007

Ms Reba Meagher, BA (Syd), MLLandR, MP.

Minister for Health,

[Reba.office@meagher.minister.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Reba.office@meagher.minister.nsw.gov.au)

[Cabramatta@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Cabramatta@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Minister,

**Older Australians in New South Wales**

It seems that older citizens are being disadvantaged by this government. I feel older people are being discriminated against with the proposed new driving rules and they also seem to be disadvantaged in hospital care.

A medical officer with NSW Health stated that the older population will not be able to be accommodated in public hospitals as there will be no extra beds, nurses or money to support them.

It seems that older ex-servicemen, mentally incapacitated and severely physically handicapped patients, and patients requiring resuscitation, will not be accommodated. Therefore it seems the only outcome will be a premature death.

Mr Rudd supports the concept of youth ahead of age, particularly for senior politicians, so he may support your approach to hospital funding.

Philosophically you do have a point; Labor policy should reflect the opinion of the wider community. The old should be sacrificed for the young shouldn't they?

Best wishes for a healthy future.

Yours sincerely

Wal Coskerie