

Submission
No 29

**INQUIRY INTO OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF
THE NORTHERN BEACHES HOSPITAL**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I live in Manly near the hospital and represent a household of 6 - of whom 5 are over 18. We have used the new NBCH. We also used the Manly Hospital prior to opening of the NBCH. I have 3 comments:

1) the NBCH has not suffered more problems, which have been well chronicled, because of the expertise and competency of the staff trained through the state public healthcare at the former Manly and Mona Vale Hospitals.

2) Manly and Mona Vale hospitals were run by the state health department, driven by the ethos of public service. Beholden to newcon philosophy, the State Government has now allowed the NBCH to be owned by private equity - in theory, with appropriate protections in the management agreement the profit motive is meant to result in a more efficient and cheaper service for the public. I believe the public will be worse off - in the US the monopoly of the private sector in service delivery means healthcare costs are double those here. And many are not eligible for healthcare. This model of delivery is not seen in countries with successful healthcare sectors, such as those in Scandinavia, northern Europe etc.

For instance, a priority now for new patients at the NBCH is to push them into the private sector. This was never the case at Manly or Mona Vale. At the NBCH patients directed (or pushed) towards the private sector now face growing out of pocket expenses, and having to meet a large gap - the 'market' does not operate here because patients are given little information about the resulting bill nor do they have any choice about which provider to use. There are no cost comparisons. They are not given the choice to insist on 'no gap' nor are they allowed to go public if they have private health insurance.

3) Since NBCH is now owned offshore by the private sector, any benefits to the community from any profits, will be enjoyed by overseas investors. The NBCH will probably be highly profitable but is unlikely to pay any corporate taxes in Australia. The community will not benefit from these gains which will accrue offshore.