

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

**Name:** Ms Penny Auburn

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I am deeply concerned about the inadequacy of the Northern Beaches Hospital to meet the needs of people on the Peninsula in need of acute medical care and Maternity services.

We have lost our local public hospital, and most importantly our acute care services which catered for thousands of locals. This was an extraordinary backward step that locals protested vigorously. That acute care needs to be returned to the neighbourhood. At the moment all we have is a 24 hour medical centre, qualified to take care of basic needs such as stitching simple wounds for over 100,000 people residing in the neighbourhood.

We are expected to travel an extra 20-60 minutes in an emergency to the Northern Beaches Hospital and share the resources and reduced public beds there with people from the further suburbs surrounding Frenchs Forest, who previously would have attended RNS or the Mater. This means the total hospital beds available to Peninsula residents, whether private or public have been, in a real sense, drastically reduced.

Add to that the very long time it would take heart or stroke patients to actually make it to Northern Beaches Hospital from anywhere north of Narrabeen, and you have a serious potential loss of life.

The Wakehurst Parkway is known to flood regularly, which makes it even more dangerous for emergency patients.

But more importantly there is change of ambulance operation policy, where ambulances from any station can be called to any emergency within many kilometres. That means that the ambulance stationed in Mona Vale will not necessarily be nearby when someone who has been in a serious car accident needs immediate help. The patient might have to wait an hour or more for an ambulance to be freed up from their current job elsewhere and make it down to, say, Whale Beach. Then it's another 40 minute ride to the Northern Beaches Hospital from the scene of the accident, which, being only a Grade 5, might not even be equipped to deal with the problem.

It has been a significant backwards step getting rid of Mona Vale Hospital Emergency and I request that this decision be reversed and that emergency be returned to Mona Vale. This will have the added benefit of freeing up beds at the Northern Beaches Hospital.

Yours sincerely

Penny Auburn