

**Submission
No 59**

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

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Minister Robert Stokes
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Dear Minister Stokes,

I shall start my letter with a question, hence trust your memory can default at the completion of the communication to a true and honest reply.

The question- What are you and your government going to do about the Emergency Department at Mona Vale Hospital?

Please do not reply with the 3-page government spin diatribe, it is inappropriate to the real issues facing the treatment of emergency problems for our Northern Beaches community, here in your constituency, which you, (and under the circumstances), I use the word loosely, "represent".

I find it irresponsible that you can be so dismissive of your constituents and their overall concerns. How can you and the Government continually deny the logic and statistics, as proven, and all showing on your own Government site, all relating to the scale of emergency treatment at Mona Vale Hospital?

Yet, despite these statistics you still fail to acknowledge the concerns of the Northern Beaches citizens.

You have utilised duplicity in promising, at the last election, to keep Mona Vale Hospital open. Ha ha, sure it is open, but under the loss of major emergency and urgent surgery requirements, (I need not elucidate on that, I am sure you are aware)!

You promised to maintain the emergency department in the 2007 election; this promise was never rescinded and as a consequence of this you have abrogated your responsibility, if not please advise me.

Why do you fail to continually honour the election promise, as it was understood by the electorate? You have well and truly failed to heed the warnings from the community of needless potential deaths?

Where is your conscience, your honour, your truth, your honesty, where is it hiding?

As you attended the Rally at Mona Vale you were obviously aware, I was directly addressing you in my speech, asking how you would feel if your parents or any of your family were stricken, as I was, and placed in a position of potential death, as I was.

I looked for you later, I was informed you had departed, unfortunately.

Forget the ambulance, you are all hiding behind that one. I have only the highest praise for paramedics, if you can get them in time, which only compounds another ludicrous situation here on the Northern Beaches.

When I suffered my heart attack, I had to drive myself to Mona Vale Hospital, collapsing in the Emergency department upon arrival. My wife could not drive me as her life had been

saved by the doctors at Mona Vale hospital when she suffered Gangrenous Peritonitis, which led to a herniated abdomen; she was incapacitated.

I was immediately rushed to an ICU ward where the stabilising treatment saved my life. I know from my own condition, and I have been assured, that if the emergency department wasn't there; **I would be DEAD**, the positive from that I suppose is you wouldn't be receiving this letter.

Unfortunately, in cases such as this the victim is not the only individual to encounter pain. The psychological pain and emotional anxiety extend to wife, children and close friends as well as extended family, although I guess I'm not telling you much with the profundity of this statement. Doesn't help anyone though, does it?

Should you continually disregard the very valid and credible concerns of the community, then one can only assess the dismissive attitude by you, and your co-conspirators, as one created by the avaricious requirement of private funding.

That in itself projects the abomination of avarice above the basic health obligations of a government and the fulfillment of those health requirements for the community as a whole.

As well as having my life saved by the staff at Mona Vale Hospital, I do wish to enlighten you as to why I retain my avid involvement in this cause.

Diagnosed in 1999 I suffered from bowel cancer, an affliction which from the tests showed I had contracted the disease 7 years prior to the symptoms showing. An operation ensued and I refused chemotherapy, and at one stage radiation. I won that battle.

There were two positive results, one obviously my life, but secondly it motivated me to start a sporting charity.

Having played first grade for both Canterbury-Bankstown then the Manly Sea Eagles over a period of eleven years, my empathy extended to my fellow players whom any could fall into, and indeed had, into the same difficult circumstances I found myself in.

As such it was I who initiated the charity "Men of League" which I originally penned "Dinosaurs".

Proudly I say "I thought of others who could find themselves in the same predicament", repeat "I thought of others....."

AS I HAVE IN THIS CASE!!!!

Therefore, as an individual and a 45-year constituent of the Northern beaches I sadly see our ostrich government and its representative ministers, perpetrators of arrogance and ignorance, to the point of the heinous endangerment of life.

It seems such an aberrance by a party that I have voted for all my life. I can assure you that vote has changed, it is over, I shall not psychologically fund a government, nor a minister who proposes false promises, nor one who seemingly refuses to consider the urgency of the matter at hand; I am certainly not alone with this action.

So I ask:

1. Would not the welfare of the constituency constitute a far greater concern than the various false criteria used to substantiate the state governments greedy financial proposals, proposed at the endangerment to life?

2. Your own government statistics, PROVE the requirement for an emergency department, including surgery yet you refuse to accept these statistics, denying outlandishly in your three-page spin document, the numbers indicate the hospital is not required- RUBBISH!
3. If the integral Mona Vale Hospital is in such a poor state of repair why were the problems not resolved many years ago? Has there been a charted course since the decision by Minister Baird to encapsulate all the surrounding districts and urban areas to fulfill a contract requirement with Healthscope to supply, as one does in private enterprise, "clients"?
4. The 3-page diatribe proposes no facilitation for immediate and urgent access to enable treatment for the ominous danger of heart attack and stroke victims. Northern Beaches Hospital cannot cater for these potential cases. Please don't say "Call an ambulance"!
5. Who will carry the blood on the hands, upon whose conscience will the first, second, third and inevitable numbers of meaningless deaths, who? How, or how long will it take for politicians to realise the dire circumstances we have been placed in, before, hopefully, the disgraceful decision to close Mona Vale Hospital is rescinded?
6. In any business a manager is responsible for decision making, he becomes answerable to his shareholders. In this case has the State Government become answerable to Healthscope?
7. As such, aren't you Rob Stokes, and other Government Ministers involved in this debacle paid a salary by your constituents, or has that changed? If the status quo is applied then you owe us some honest answers, after all who elected you?
8. And, may I ask what educational qualifications have you, and any of your fellow politicians have which relate to the management and building of hospitals, in order to qualify you to make these decisions when faced with irrefutable proof that your very own statistics demonstrate?
9. Does this cave that you politicians live in have any light at all?
Is it a dark chasm in which you all dwell, such as to remain out of the eyes of prying constituents?
Eventually you will have to emerge from the darkness, just like bats, which you can do so easily, emerge conscience free, leaving all your built-up shit behind.
Or, will you continue flying through the day, with eyes wide shut, portraying a reckless abandonment to responsibility, aptly accompanying your blind-sighted fantasy?

WE all have had to continually suffer the political hypocrisy relating to the closing of a fundamental right which is integral to the lives of our community. We have had to suffer the bluster and spin of hypocrites, announcing the brand-new state of the art level 5 hospital, which it ISN'T; a hospital that cannot even care for emergency cardiac nor neurological emergencies.

Your constituents out here in "La la" land, we are real, and at this stage alive, we are conscious, we all carry a conscience.

How on earth did we elect someone so devoid of those basic human qualities?

Sir Francis Bacon took great lengths to write "Of Revenge" an essay noting "revenge is a kind of wild justice which the poor man's nature runs to". I am sure that the nature of

revenge will appear at the next election, it will be pure and appropriate, I thank Sir Francis for his assistance in being able to end this letter.

Obviously great criticism has been levelled in this letter. It is representative, symbolic, of the level of anger and frustration that exists in the community, but we remain passionately hopeful that you will finally understand, then direct a funding policy to ensure the longevity of the Mona Vale Hospital Emergency Department, along with the appropriate surgical requirements.

I trust you will reply to the questions I have proposed, and as such can you now direct your honesty and conscience to the first question? Thank you.

I await your reply,

Max Brown