

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 21 July 2019

Partially
Confidential

Terms of Reference addressed.

- a) I was shocked to learn that the whole hospital was to be run for profit by a private company. I should have looked into the proposal of course, but I assumed that a public/private hospital would mean that there would be a public hospital with a private hospital adjacent, like RNS, Nepean etc.
- b) I believe it is to be sold off to another company. Health is too important to be traded like futures, or other shares on the open market.
- c) No opinion
- d) Standards of service provision and care at the hospital .I was an inpatient in the hospital from 5th February for 8 days for a hemi colectomy. I was sent a survey by email after I went home which I completed with several concerns. This was not acknowledged. I email my concerns again but again received no acknowledgement. My surgeon, , provided excellent care. He kept me informed and visited me every day in hospital. I had a slight cardio incident in theatre (SVT) and asked my cardiologist, to see me in hospital. did not attend me there. appeared to be concerned that had not followed up for him. I have complained about my unprofessional treatment by the anaesthetist, . I emailed his practice twice, then I phoned them with no response. I then made a complaint to the Health Care Complaints Commission. The nursing staff were pleasant and helpful but it was obvious that there is no common nursing protocol with great variance in the standard of care. I was surprised that after having major abdominal surgery, I was not advised on suitable diet.
- e) I believe that there have been many changes of staff and this seems to have led to a poor staff morale. Many, many agency nurses and inexperienced hospital doctors (residents? Registrars?)

I was woken at midnight by a doctor who said she had to insert a canula for a drip in my arm. This was about 3 days post operatively and I believe it was not needed. I refused this and it was never repeated. It was distressing as I was in some pain and was not sleeping very well. Being woken like this, quite unnecessarily was not good. I had a catheter inserted when I was in theatre. This was very uncomfortable from the start. (I have had this before without a problem.) About 3 days post op I asked a nurse to remove but she refused, saying that she had to get a doctor's approval and it could not be removed until the following day. I was walking quite well to the bathroom and had no need of this and the attendant discomfort. At one stage the bag of urine leaked on the floor and the nurse said that the nurse who had attached it hadn't shut the stopper (?) properly. I asked if the urine on the floor should be cleaned up but, to my horror, the nurse dismissed that and said it could be cleaned up later. To my knowledge, it was not cleaned up.
- f) It has been a big blow to the folk living in the northern beaches. I believe this hospital does not communicate with the northern health services and has not given my notes to my GP. It has been very demoralising to have two functioning hospitals closed down, to be replaced by one which is not working at all satisfactorily to serve residents. Should I need to be hospitalised again, I would make every effort not to go to NBH and would undertake the extra travel to use RNS, The Adventist Hospital, or the Mater Hospital.
- g) Public private partnership is a disaster for health care. From the premature opening of this hospital in November last year, up until the present, it has provided an unsatisfactory service, motivated by profit only and by lack of commitment to the health and welfare of Northern Beaches residents.

Concerning anaesthetist

1. I did not meet before the surgery but he phoned me at home the evening before.
2. While I was in the ante room, attempted to put a sensor (?) into the artery in my left arm. This was unsuccessful and I bled profusely. I felt my hand fill with blood, and the assisting nurse told that he had blood all over his shoes.
3. then did this procedure on my right arm, this time getting the cannula/sensor in. This was quite painful.
4. He then took a long time to insert a spinal anaesthetic, but this was done eventually.
5. I was then taken into theatre. He put a mask over my nose and mouth before I was fully unconscious which was distressing and caused me to panic and to say "I can't breathe".
6. Apparently, shortly after this I had an episode of tachycardia, followed later by another episode. I don't know why this happened and it hasn't happened since, so I can only surmise that it occurred as I was very upset at the time of being anaesthetised, due to the bungled artery insertion and the mask being put on my face while I was still awake, and it was due to my high level of stress and anxiety.
7. Due to the tachycardia, I was sent to ICU after the surgery, and then to a ward for cardiac monitoring, and finally to the post-surgery ward 2 days after my operation.
8. I did not see post operatively. I would have expected him to check up on me, given that I had this concerning episode during surgery.
9. I have had major surgery four times in my life. I have never had such an upsetting experience in the administration of anaesthesia.

My second email to sent 18 February 2019 (I don't have a copy of the survey which I completed the same day.)

Dear ,

Thank you for the survey received by email by me this morning. I did complete the survey, but since then have thought of a couple of things I would like to add.

- The nursing care was acceptable, and each and every one of the nursing staff was friendly and helpful. However, there does seem to be a need for nursing protocols to be synced across the hospital. There were some inconsistencies. (noted above) On a clear fluids diet, I was shocked to be offered jelly "Made in China". Surely such a low cost item could be sourced locally.
- I waited a long time for my surgery. I was told to be at the hospital at 9.30am, fasted since 7.30, and was informed that I would go to theatre at about 11.45am. I did not get to theatre until about 2.30 and by this time (not having had any explanation for the delay) I was very anxious, stressed and quite dehydrated. This may have contributed to the cardiac event which happened when I was under anaesthetic.

I am not a complainer and very much want our local hospital to be the very best it can be.