

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

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Partially
Confidential

At 0815 on Thursday morning, on the 1st of November, 2018, I slipped on a driveway in Palm Beach and fractured my ankle breaking both the tibia and fibula. , who was with me, immediately rang 000. An ambulance crew consisting of (paramedic) and arrived from Avalon at around 0840. They stabilised me and made the decision to call in the Fire Brigade to help carry me to the ambulance. I have lived on the Northern Beaches for 30 years, so of course one of the fires happened to be some one I knew from when my kids are at school at Newport. It's a close community up here!

So off I went to be a participant in the second day of our new Northern Beaches Hospital at Frenchs Forest.

We arrived at the hospital at 1010, and I was fairly quickly processed into emergency. My first nurse, , was excellent. The two physios who assisted were also very good, as was , the wardman who took me to and from XRay. The technicians at XRay were still trying to sort their equipment out but they got some good pictures. The team that put the leg back in place and plastered were thorough and efficient, and it was during this I learned that the operating theatres were really busy. As my swelling wasn't too bad the Orthopedic registrar, recommended that I be operated on the next day to get a good result and he arranged with Dr. to operate on me the next day at the Mater.

It was at this point that things went off the rails. I was seriously medicated on Morphine and Ketamine. We were shipped upstairs to Short Stay. I think the staff assumed my wife Fiona would be taking me home and turning up at the Mater the next day, but I was so unwell I couldn't move. (and in any case we have many stairs and to attempt to go home that night and go the next day to the Mater was madness). I had a couple of lessons with the Physios to make sure I was okay on the crutches at around 1530-1600, but apart from that we were completely ignored up in Short Stay - no offers of food or water until 1900 when a nurse came over to ask if we were okay. I was asleep around 1530 when a doctor checked on me and Fiona discussed going to the Mater - he agreed to contact the Mater and get me a room there. He was very busy in Emergency and it wasn't until a bit after 1900 that he came back to us and started getting things happening. Please note that the doctor undertook all this, none of the many staff on computers and phones in Short Stay helped at all. Dr eventually arrived with the good news we had a room at the Mater. But guess what - there was no form of Patient Transfer - Fiona had to do it. offered to wheel me out to the reception area but I could see he was so busy I did it myself. So there I was out the front of our brand new hospital, waiting for my wife to transport me to another hospital another 20 kms (30 minutes away) - the lonely guy in a wheelchair. To add to the irony while I was waiting a Paramedic Emergency vehicle pulled up and one of the guys helped me into our car when Fiona finally arrived from the car park. I felt really let down by the management of Healthscope. Most of the staff were not prepared for the onslaught of the first few days - Emergency was seriously busy (140 cases). It seems that they had a short orientation of 1 hour and they were having to work out the procedures as they went along. The fact that after I was assigned to another hospital I was literally abandoned and my wife Fiona had become my Patient Transfer shows an appalling lack of concern about treatment of patients at Northern Beaches Hospital.

This ranks as one of the worst days of my life - I was let down by the hospital administration while I was in great pain and unable to move easily - I had a broken ankle, which now has 2 plates and 9 screws supporting it.

We need Mona Vale Emergency to stay as it's obvious the new hospital is not able to cope with the large population that it has to manage. After my experience I am wondering if I should leave

my home of 30 years so that I can be close to a hospital that can provide proper care - somewhere like Braidwood, Murwillimbah, Bellingen, or inner Sydney where much smaller populations enjoy good public healthcare.