

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 26 July 2019

Partially
Confidential

To the NBH Enquiry,

Please find a summary of our experience at NBH below. We recently found ourselves needing urgent medical care and were left feeling very underwhelmed and letdown by our experience. Prior to this we have always had great experiences with the public health service. We had both our children at Mona Vale Public Hospital and have also attended there on a number of different occasions for medical episodes and were always so impressed and grateful for the care we received.

Summary of events for – Travelling from North Avalon (approx. 40min each way) 3 trips and 120mins travel time prior to correct diagnosis

23/7/2019 – times are approximate

12:00 – Onset of stomach cramping around navel area. Nausea.

19:00 – Attended Mona Vale Urgent Care due to worsening cramps and pain developing in lower right abdomen. Both the triage nurse and doctor said symptoms were consistent with appendicitis and go straight to NBH.

20:00 – Arrived at NBH, triaged, immediately given 1 x wafer for nausea. Assessed by Dr. Justin Wang (introduced as Junior Doctor on duty). At this point nausea and cramping eased slightly, but pain in lower abdomen still present (9/10 pain when the area was pressed, 3/10 when not pressed). He seemed puzzled by the symptoms and asked many questions, including to clarify the area of cramping and pain. Was given 1 x wafer for nausea, 1 x dose Panadol, blood test, urine test, 1 x IV fluids for dehydration.

20:30? – Assessed by Dr. Clifford Reid (introduced as Team Leader). Didn't seem to think it was appendicitis. He explained that WBC count was up, but needed an ultra sound or CT scan to diagnose. Advised against CT scan to avoid unnecessary radiation exposure. Advised that no ultra sound available at night unless an emergency and that "they don't like us calling them in" as it's expensive and that we would have to wait until tomorrow morning to get the ultra sound with nothing more able to be done until then apart from pain relief. Given the option of staying in the short stay or going home and told it wouldn't make a difference.

22:00 - Discharged and instructed by Dr. Wang to "call Imaging at 08:00 to find out what time the ultrasound will be". Departed hospital with discharge summary. Discharge summary included someone else's confidential results.

Please let it be clear that my husband and I left the hospital both very much under the same assumption that:

- a) My condition was not presenting clearly as appendicitis, and if so, in its very early stages
- b) The ultrasound would be organised through the emergency department for the morning. I simply had to find out when it would be and turn up.
- c) Spending the night at home rather than in the short stay unit wouldn't impede the diagnostic procedure (i.e. ultrasound, doctor review, etc).

24/7/2019

08:00 – Attempted to contact Northern Beaches Imaging on number provided numerous times. Unable to get in contact. Also tried calling through switchboard with no luck.

09:00 – Still unable to contact NBI so start driving to NBH as pain is worsening at this point.

09:15 – Finally manage to get an answer at NBI who have no knowledge of the case or any booking being made. Informed will cost \$80 and was asked who results will be going to. I explained that this is confusing as I was under the assumption that I was still under the care of the ED doctor as they had referred the ultrasound and therefore the ED doctor would review the results with me. NBI helpful and able to squeeze in an appointment at 10:30.

09:45 – Arrive at hospital and wait in NBI waiting room

10:30 – Ultrasound done confirming appendicitis and I was walked back to ED by Sonographer

10:45 – Triaged, seen by junior doctor (Name ?), then another doctor.

Request made to access private health care. Surgical team arrive and informed going straight to surgery. Unable to find wardsperson to take me to surgery so surgical team push me up to theatre ward themselves.

11:15 - Surgery for removal of appendix (Dr Noushi).

25/7/2019

1400 – Discharged however discharge summary incorrectly states “repeat examination overnight in the short stay unit that showed localised right iliac fossa pain maximal at McBurneys Point”

This did not happen as I didn’t stay in the short stay unit?

Questions we have:

1. Is this appropriate care?
2. Should a patient with above mentioned symptoms be told it is ok to go home for the night and return in the morning?
3. What is the cost of getting an ultra sound done at night? Is this the value of a human life at NBH?

Please understand these are just our initial thoughts as its only 24 hours since returning home however we are aware the submissions were closing so wanted to have our experience heard.

We are more than happy to discuss this further in the hope that our public health experiences can return to the former high level that we were fortunate to receive.