

**Submission
No 240**

**INQUIRY INTO HEALTH OUTCOMES AND ACCESS TO
HEALTH AND HOSPITAL SERVICES IN RURAL,
REGIONAL AND REMOTE NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Mr Bill Hancock
Date Received: 11 December 2020

To: NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Health Outcomes and Services in Rural, Regional and Remote NSW
Committee Chair the Hon.
Greg Donnelly MLC.

Dear Sir.

The location of a hospital is crucial when saving of lives.

Being aware of the scientific evidence and not doing something about hospital location is to ignore “Foreseeable Risk”.

Foreseeable risk is used in determining if somebody is guilty of negligence.

“Increased journey distance to hospital appears to be associated with increased risk of mortality. Our data suggest that a 10-km increase in straight-line distance is associated with around a 1% absolute increase in mortality”.

(REF -Emergency Medical Journal 2007 Sep;24(9):665-8. doi: 10.1136/emj.2007.047654.)

“Distance between home and admitting hospital was significantly associated with increased mortality” . (Ref: National Library of Medicine, National Centre for Biotechnology Information - Heart.

2008 Sep;94(9):1141-6. doi: 10.1136/hrt.2007.123612. Epub 2007, Nov 5.)

“A 27% higher risk of out-of-hospital mortality for patients living far from the nearest hospital, (over 17 minutes of traveling time)” . Ref: National Library of Medicine, National

Centre for Biotechnology Information. [Distance from the nearest hospital and mortality for acute myocardial infarction (AMI) in Sicily Region (Southern Italy)] Epidemiol Prev. Nov-Dec 2014;38(6):373-8.

On average, NSW patients waited 11.4 minutes for an ambulance in 2018-2019. 11.2 minutes the year before and 11.1 minutes in 2016-2018. Response times are increasing.

- Wollongong Hospital is 19.5 km or 28 minutes from Shellharbour Hospital. **People living half way have a travel time of 14 minutes.**
- Shellharbour Hospital is 56.5 km or 48 minutes from Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital. **People living half way have a travel time of 24 minutes.**
- Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital is 63.3 km or 59 minutes from Milton Ulladulla Hospital. **People living half way have a travel time of 29.5 minutes.**

Wollongong Hospital to Milton Ulladulla Hospital is 137.7 km, a travel time of 112 minutes.

Ideally hospitals should be located equally distanced, that equates to 45.9 km between each hospital or a travel time of 37.3 minutes.

People living half way would have a travel time of 18.6 minutes, a reasonably acceptable time considering the scientific evidence.

The Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital site was first selected in 1919, 100 years ago, but only as a site for a cottage hospital.

Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital **is not** at the geographical centre of the population it serves and is built in, only accessible via a few congested narrow residential streets.

Today development has moved the geographic centre of population further to the south and today access is required for high-speed emergency vehicles, not horse-drawn wagons. Today the Shoalhaven Street site would never be considered for a hospital, to save lives and with the \$434 million development now promised, the hospital must be relocated.