

Submission  
No 310

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date Received:** 14 December 2020

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Partially  
Confidential

## The Inquiry into regional Health Care - Points for consideration

NSW health knows:

- the mountains can't get enough specialists to go to Katoomba
- Katoomba hospital (and Springwood) has had its day
- patients and staff suffer from being on a building site
- it is cheaper to build a new hospital than renovate one

### 1. The Blue Mountains

- is a region defined by its terrain and the vast wilderness which surrounds its towns
- has the oldest and fastest aging population of any local government area in NSW.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. Local Health District – about the Nepean Blue Mountains LHD

- Encompasses 9,179 Km<sup>2</sup>
- Nepean Hospital is a 520-bed teaching hospital.<sup>i</sup>
- Received nearly a \$1Billion to build a new wing
- Is under pressure from population growth particularly of an aging and obese population
- Will be overwhelmed by the Aerotropolis's population who will not have a hospital
- Katoomba hospital is 64 kms from Nepean hospital and has poor transport connections
- Wants a single new hospital on the Blue Mtns i.e. to merge Katoomba and Springwood
- NSW Health report *One Hospital Plan for the Blue Mountains* is reported to put the pros and cons of locating the new hospital in Lawson or keeping it where it is and building an annex on the oval (called the Showground) in the deep valley below<sup>ii</sup>

### 3. Katoomba hospital

- Is 95 years old
- Started with 22 beds.
- Now has 110 beds<sup>iii</sup> due "organic" growth down the century
- Has a 50-yo satellite - Springwood hospital (27 beds) – to be closed
- Site is fully developed; land remaining is constrained by steep slope and bushfire risk<sup>iv</sup>
- Katoomba's Showground (an oval in the valley below the hospital) is 48,289m<sup>2</sup> <sup>v</sup>

4. Lawson is the mooted alternative site (greenfield) for the single hospital and:
- Is large 1,125,255.41 m<sup>2</sup> (23 times larger than Katoomba Showground)<sup>vi</sup>
  - Is in a relatively shallow, wide, cleared valley
  - Has services readily available
  - Has available from/to the highway access to roads relatively easy to upgrade
  - Is an easy walk to the town centre and station
  - lacks any insurmountable or even serious environmental constraints

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<sup>i</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nepean\\_Hospital](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nepean_Hospital); Feb 5, 2020 — **Blue Mountains: Planning for a single district hospital**, [www.dailytelegraph.com.au › newslocal › news-story](http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/news-story)

<sup>ii</sup> [HTTPS://WWW.BLUEMOUNTAINSGAZETTE.COM.AU/STORY/5590020/NEW-HOSPITAL-PLAN-FOR-BLUE-MOUNTAINS-REVEALED/](https://www.bluemountainsgazette.com.au/story/5590020/new-hospital-plan-for-blue-mountains-revealed/)

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.nswphysioallocation.com.au/hospital/11>

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/crown-lands> - for maps see Planning Area 2 for Katoomba and Planning Area 3 for Lawson

<sup>v</sup> Ibid - see Planning Area 2 for Katoomba, pg 13

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid - see pgs 13-14 of Planning Area 3 for Lawson which shows the former golf course, (reserve No 89440) and neighbouring Lawson Oval and BMX Track Reserve No 52559 together have this area.