

**Submission
No 411**

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

Name: Mrs Vicki Kearines
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My submission is about the virtual doctor that is being used in our regional hospitals.

It is an extremely poor system for the elderly in particular.

My father was admitted to Narromine Hospital on Boxing Day 2020 and passed away on 4 January and during this time he was seen regularly by the virtual doctor. He couldn't or didn't access his medical records in regards to his cancer, he treated the family as if we just wanted to get rid of dad so we could enjoy the holidays, not listening to the fact that although our father was 92 he was living independently doing woodwork and fixing lawnmowers up to 3 weeks before his admission.

He did not read the notes from the Palliative Care nurse and delayed the syringe driver for morphine delivery saying that dad could ask for pain relief or buzz for the nurse even though my father could not control his hands or was mostly sleeping. Then, despite the fact my father couldn't walk, sit, use his hands he informed me I could take him out for lunch, he obviously wasn't looking at the same as I was sitting beside. His bedside manner was appalling, no consideration for older people who are hard of hearing and mostly not familiar with technology.

My father was one of the lucky ones with 5 family members taking turns of being with our father almost 18 hours a day - certainly not a family who wanted to get rid of their father.

This system MUST change, we need VMO at the hospitals 7 days per week, you cannot get rid of these regional hospitals our country towns need them, the very large hospital in Dubbo, even though it is under renovation and upgrade has a huge area to service and cannot cope with the palliative care that is needed in our communities.

I would like to say how wonderful the Nursing staff, housekeeping staff were during our father's stay, however I'm am totally dismayed at the poor quality of care given by the Virtual Doctors.

Please review this system it is failing the most precious of our communities, our elderly.