

## Special Commission of Inquiry into Healthcare Funding

### Statement of Lucinda Ingersole

**Name:** Lucinda Ingersole  
**Professional address:** Cooma Hospital, Bent St, Cooma NSW 2630  
**Occupation:** Clinical Nurse Specialist / Registered Nurse, Cooma Hospital, Southern NSW Local Health District

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I would be prepared, if necessary, to give to the Special Commission of Inquiry into Healthcare Funding (the **Inquiry**) as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
2. This statement is provided in response a request from the Inquiry following its site visit to Cooma Hospital on 13 August 2024.

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

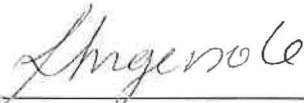
3. My name is Lucinda Ingersole. I am a Registered Nurse at Cooma Hospital in Southern NSW Local Health District (**SNSWLHD**), a role which I have been in since July 2021. I am currently the Clinical Nurse Specialist 2 in the Cooma Hospital's operating theatres, which I commenced in September 2022.
4. A copy of my curriculum vitae is exhibited to this statement (**MOH.0010.0518.0001**).

#### **B. REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT OF EQUIPMENT IN COOMA HOSPITAL**

5. As part of my role, I am required to assist with patient care, operation of endoscopy equipment, management of surgical instruments, and the surgical wait list.
6. Currently, the endoscopy equipment at Cooma Hospital is outdated and is often required to be sent for servicing/repair, which is not covered by service contracts. As a result, I understand that equipment is acquired through loan arrangements from external providers, if available. As a result of endoscopy equipment having to be sent for servicing, not being able to be replaced, or delays in acquiring leased equipment, procedures such as gastroscopies and colonoscopies have been delayed from time to time during operating lists. On one single day in July 2024, there was 95 minutes of documented delay due to equipment unavailability, while endoscopes were being reprocessed. This, in turn, affects patient flow and utilisation of the operating theatre, as well as patient experience and satisfaction.

7. Endoscopes that are currently in use at Cooma are around 7 years old and are no longer covered under their manufacturing warranty or 5-year service contracts. Rapid deterioration of endoscopes since 2022 has resulted in regular repairs by a third party provider, and consequently \$68,764.88 worth of repair cost to the Cooma Operating Theatre Cost Centre. In July 2024, two Colonoscopes failed on-site quality testing due to leaks from cracked devices. These were sent for repair, and one loan unit was obtained. This resulted in delicate list planning to ensure patients' colonoscopies were not delayed treatment or cancelled due to insufficient equipment. Repairs from this encounter came at a cost of an additional \$23,980. This comes to a total of \$92,744.88 worth of endoscope repairs in the past two years. As Cooma Operating Theatre only operates 6 days per fortnight, the surgical bookings team have been able to manage the waitlist to avoid cancellation and delays of patient procedures outside of recommended timeframes.
8. In March 2024, a quote was obtained to replace our current endoscope fleet by purchasing 7 new endoscopes and associated updates for information technology. I understand there is no budget for this equipment renewal.
9. In addition to endoscopic equipment, general surgical instruments at Cooma Hospital have become outdated with usage, and have been unable to be replaced due to financial constraints and minimal budget for equipment purchase. For example, in November 2023, orthopaedic drills used for Anterior Cruciate Ligament, and Rotator Cuff Repairs, as well as minor foot and ankle surgeries were deemed unrepairable due to age, requiring replacement, or alternatively cancelling patient procedures, or removing patients from Cooma waitlist and redirecting them to alternate SNSWLHD sites. The inability to use the drills and accompanying batteries meant a set of 3 newer generation drills and batteries were purchased at a cost of \$17,387.46. While this cost was heavily reduced by acquiring ex-demonstration, rather than new items, the warranty was limited to 3-months after purchase.
10. There is no sterilising capacity at Cooma Hospital, and all surgical instruments are transported to South East Regional Hospital (**SERH**) for processing. This entails a 3 – 4 day turnaround, depending on SERH Central Sterile Services Department capacity and staffing levels. As a result of this, Cooma Theatre must ensure they have enough

duplicates of equipment for elective surgery, to ensure sterilisation is maintained and to avoid cancellations on the day of surgery.



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Lucinda Ingersole



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Witness: Catherine Pearce

29/08/2024

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Date

29/08/2024

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Date