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New South Wales

## Special Commission of Inquiry into Healthcare Funding

23 April 2024

Ms Anna McFadgen  
 Chief Executive Officer  
 St Vincent's Hospital Sydney Limited  
 390 Victoria Street  
 Darlinghurst NSW 2010

**By email:** [anna.mcfadgen@svha.org.au](mailto:anna.mcfadgen@svha.org.au); [svhs.medico-legal@svha.org.au](mailto:svhs.medico-legal@svha.org.au)

**Copy to:** [elliott.stein@svha.org.au](mailto:elliott.stein@svha.org.au)

Dear Ms McFadgen,

### Special Commission of Inquiry into Healthcare Funding – June Hearings

Thank you for your ongoing engagement with representatives of the Special Commission of Inquiry into Healthcare Funding (**the Inquiry**).

The Inquiry is in the process of planning for upcoming public hearings to be held in Sydney from **3 to 14 June 2024 (June Hearings)**. The intended focus of the June Hearings is on four particular hospitals / networks, including the St Vincent's Health Network Sydney (**the Network**).

In this context, I write to advise you of the topics the Inquiry presently intends to examine at the June Hearings in relation to the Network, and to request the Network's assistance in identifying witnesses who can speak to those topics.

### Topics for the June Hearings relating to the Network

I set out below a summary of the key topics the Inquiry presently intends to examine in relation to the Network. These are preliminary and may change.

1. The benefits and limitations of a model in which a public hospital is operated by an affiliated health organisation, including in relation to:
  - a. the governance and funding of the Network's public operations, including:

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- i. the responsibilities of the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (**SESLHD**) for governance and funding compared with the responsibilities of the Ministry of Health, and whether the current distribution of those responsibilities is appropriate;
    - ii. the process of setting activity targets, budgets and key performance indicators each year, including the Network's ability to negotiate with SESLHD / the Ministry about those matters; and
    - iii. the processes for monitoring and managing the performance of the Network's public operations; and
  - b. any particular workforce challenges associated with this model (such as the transferability of staff to the public system).
2. The appropriateness and adequacy of current funding models for sustaining operations within the Network, including the funding of:
- a. complex / highly specialised services;
  - b. state-wide / national services; and
  - c. capital and other non-recurring expenditure.
3. Any lessons for the NSW Health system that can be derived from a comparison of the public operations within the Network with:
- a. St Vincent's Health Australia's (**SVHA**'s) private hospital operations; and
  - b. SVHA's operations in Victoria.

### Next steps

I would be grateful if the Network could nominate witnesses who may be able to give evidence about the topics identified above. Without being prescriptive, we envisage that these witnesses may include members of Network management, as well as clinicians or other operational staff who can speak to the topics identified above from an 'on the ground' perspective.

To assist us in deciding which of the witnesses identified by the Network should be called (and therefore which witnesses we will request statements to be prepared for), please set out when identifying potential witnesses:

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1. the position description of each witness;
2. those topics the Network considers the witness can speak to; and
3. a very brief summary of the evidence that it is anticipated the witness will be in a position to give in relation to those topics.

You are also welcome to identify any additional topics that the Network considers would be useful to examine as part of this hearing block bearing in mind its overarching purpose as set out at the beginning of this letter.

We request that you provide the information requested above by no later than **4pm on 7 May 2024**.

Please do not hesitate to contact James Palmer at [james.palmer@specialcommission.nsw.gov.au](mailto:james.palmer@specialcommission.nsw.gov.au) if you have any other concerns or queries in relation to the above, or if you would like to discuss these issues in further detail.

Yours faithfully,



James Palmer

**Senior Solicitor**

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