



Justin
CLANCY MP
MEMBER FOR ALBURY

22 March 2024

Commissioner Richard Beasley SC
Special Commission of Inquiry into Healthcare Funding
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SYDNEY NSW 2001
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Dear Commissioner

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Richard'.

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you on 7 March, to represent issues relevant to the delivery of healthcare services in the Albury-Wodonga community.

As discussed, these two cities operate as a single community and, since 2009, have shared the same acute and sub-acute services hospital as the only example of a truly integrated cross-border hospital service in the nation.

Many of the issues raised have particular relevance and application to regional communities, with the overlay of cross-border complexities and the interaction of NSW, Victorian and Commonwealth governments in the exercise of their various roles and financial responsibilities.

I would like to make a brief submission on key issues.

Digital EMR inequities and incompatibilities continue to dog our region's public healthcare facilities. This is apparent within NSW but perhaps even more confused in Victorian managed hospitals of the Hume.

Not only is this a safety issue for patients, but it has become apparent from Albury Wodonga Health that the lack of integrated systems has become a disincentive for employment and the attraction of new medical staff.

Staff feel exposed and unable to perform their duties to the level their professionalism demands. Funding at current levels is not delivering the rapid progress this situation demands.

The waves flow outwards, from patients to staff to research capabilities and workflow management planning.

Health infrastructure planning between NSW and Victoria faces the real challenge of two states and two health departments which must work together for planning, funding and delivery of further stages for Albury Hospital.

The growing region must be recognized by both states and the federal government and supported to achieve the required service delivery.

At present the federal government does not have the appetite to assist the cross border health service to achieve its potential.

Primary health care is suffering from inadequate federal support. This leads directly to missed GP appointments, lost opportunities for early intervention, and thereby to ED presentations with advanced health conditions.

Are the states able to work together to obtain greater support for bulk billing and other primary healthcare service expansion through the federal government?

Costs of locum services, for nurses and doctors, are spiraling as health services across the nation compete on price and work conditions for the same relieving staff. From what I am hearing we have an escalating problem of paying locums well above the remuneration provided to permanent staff.

This inequity in salary and workplace conditions (e.g. levels of responsibility and administration; provision of worker accommodation) places pressure on those doctors and nurses who commit to their hospital service and tests their willingness to be paid less while shouldering higher responsibility.

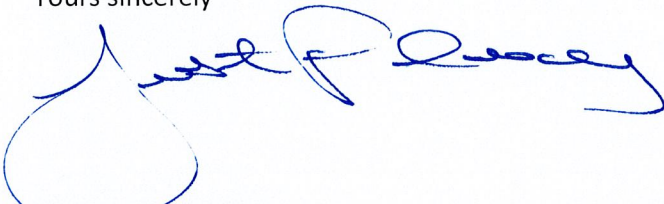
There are also examples of **program inequities** due to Albury's cross-border hospital service. In this regard it has been noted that Albury residents do not benefit from the rollout of eating disorder coordinators that was funded for each local health district in NSW.

I would also draw your attention to the successful piloting by Murrumbidgee Local Health District of the Single Employer Model. Without some level of intervention by the NSW Government I can see how Albury and its healthcare providers could miss out on this worthy initiative.

These program inequities are both financial, geographical and political, with Victorian managed Albury Hospital sidelined on NSW departmental maps – a blank spot which is too hard to integrate into NSW plans and spending.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to have met with the Commissioner and to make this submission to the Special Commission of Inquiry and I would appreciate any further opportunities to contribute or be involved.

Yours sincerely



JUSTIN CLANCY MP
Member for Albury