



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

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11 August, 2014

Residents balk at Premier Baird's plan to privatise Northern Beaches Hospital

Residents across Sydney's Northern Beaches are calling on NSW Premier Mike Baird to rethink his plans to privatise the majority of the state's assets, in particular public hospitals.

A new ReachTEL poll commissioned by the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) found more than 76 per cent of residents surveyed in the state electorate of Manly, Premier Baird's own electorate, were concerned about the NSW Government's plan of privatising public hospitals and health services.

The survey, of 755 local residents on the evening of 21 July, revealed around 66 per cent of respondents aged 18-34 years were worried about the new Northern Beaches Hospital being run by a private operator.

The NSW Government received a poor report card in relation to its engagement with the community about plans for the new Northern Beaches Hospital – more than 48 per cent of residents between 35-50 years indicated they were dissatisfied with the government's level of consultation.

An overwhelming 82 per cent of all respondents to the poll also confirmed they were pleased with the level of public health services currently provided in the local area.

General Secretary of the NSWNMA, Brett Holmes, said the poll results clearly indicated residents had a message for Premier Baird to take their concerns on board surrounding the privatisation of the new Northern Beaches Hospital.

"The local community is opposed to the encroaching privatisation of the public health system, starting with the new Northern Beaches Hospital planned for the 6.5 hectare site at Frenchs Forest," Mr Holmes said.

"Our members hold grave concerns about the impact a combined public-private hospital will have on access for local patients, as well as the high failure rate of privately-operated public hospital models across Australia.

"Premier Baird needs to start listening to the nurses, midwives and residents of the Northern Beaches and take their privatisation concerns seriously. He did not seek a mandate to privatise his local Hospital in the 2011 election, but the electorate may have something to say about it at the 2015 poll."

During the NSWNMA's 69th annual conference at Rosehill Gardens recently (30 July to 1 August), delegates from both Mona Vale and Manly Hospital Branches successfully passed resolutions to continue lobbying the NSW Government to reverse its decision to hand the new hospital over to private operators under a 20-year lease.

The Mona Vale Hospital Branch resolution stated:



The people of the Northern Beaches expect and deserve a public hospital, publicly-owned and run by the Local Health District, like our other world class public hospitals. We cannot allow our government to gift public hospitals to private companies because our patients suffer, our conditions suffer and our public health system is dismantled.

Meanwhile, the Manly District Hospital Branch resolution indicated:

Public-private partnerships should not be the primary mode of healthcare on the Northern Beaches, where the public health system is left as a rump for the poor and welfare-dependent. The Government's own tender documents for the Northern Beaches explicitly promote the growth of private health provision and promises the new operator a stagnant public health system that will not compete with its private operations.

The NSWNMA delegates unanimously agreed to continue their campaign to oppose the privatisation of the new Northern Beaches Hospital and to educate the local community about threats to the future of public health services locally.

****Media Alert:** *Members of the NSWNMA, together with other community representatives, will participate in a peaceful afternoon rally outside the proposed Northern Beaches Hospital site this week.*

The group will gather off Warringah Road at Frenchs Forest (opposite Bantry Bay shops) from 4pm on Wednesday 13 August, 2014.

NB: A copy of the ReachTEL poll is attached below.

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– FINAL RESULTS –

ReachTEL conducted a survey of 755 residents across the New South Wales state electorate of Manly. The survey was conducted during the night of 21st July 2014.

Question:

How would you rate the level of public health services available in the Northern Beaches area?

	Total	Female	Male	18-34	35-50	51-65	65+
Very good	16.4%	15.8%	17.0%	19.2%	12.9%	13.8%	22.4%
Good	27.6%	31.7%	23.4%	12.5%	29.3%	35.5%	42.2%
Satisfactory	38.8%	35.4%	42.3%	44.6%	37.6%	40.1%	28.4%
Poor	13.7%	11.6%	16.0%	16.1%	18.3%	8.6%	6.0%
Very poor	3.5%	5.5%	1.3%	7.6%	1.9%	2.0%	0.9%

Question:

How concerned are you about the new Northern Braches Hospital planned for Frenchs Forrest being run by private companies?

	Total	Female	Male	18-34	35-50	51-65	65+
Very concerned	28.3%	33.8%	22.9%	22.1%	32.6%	30.9%	27.4%
Somewhat concerned	33.0%	31.7%	34.3%	44.1%	23.5%	31.6%	35.0%
Not concerned	33.4%	32.2%	34.6%	26.1%	36.7%	36.2%	35.9%
Unaware	5.3%	2.4%	8.2%	7.7%	7.2%	1.3%	1.7%



Question:

How would you rate the state Governments engagement with the community about the Northern Beaches Hospital?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>18-34</i>	<i>35-50</i>	<i>51-65</i>	<i>65+</i>
<i>Very good</i>	7.0%	6.1%	8.0%	2.7%	5.0%	10.5%	15.4%
<i>Good</i>	18.4%	17.7%	19.1%	17.0%	14.9%	24.3%	21.4%
<i>Satisfactory</i>	35.7%	32.8%	38.7%	41.5%	31.7%	31.6%	39.3%
<i>Poor</i>	27.9%	33.1%	22.8%	24.6%	37.0%	24.3%	17.9%
<i>Very poor</i>	10.9%	10.3%	11.4%	14.3%	11.5%	9.2%	6.0%

Question:

How concerned are you about the state Government privatising public hospitals and health services?

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>18-34</i>	<i>35-50</i>	<i>51-65</i>	<i>65+</i>
<i>Very concerned</i>	45.0%	47.4%	42.4%	49.8%	47.9%	40.1%	35.0%
<i>Somewhat concerned</i>	31.2%	34.9%	27.6%	21.1%	33.5%	35.5%	40.2%
<i>Not concerned</i>	23.8%	17.7%	30.0%	29.1%	18.6%	24.3%	24.8%

This survey was conducted using an automated telephone based survey system among 755 voters. The data has been weighted to reflect the population age and gender distribution as provided by the ABS. Telephone numbers and the person within the household were selected at random. Copyright ReachTEL Pty Ltd.

