



Media release

Concord Hospital upgrade – good to have something, but too little, too late

Given the urgency of upgrading Concord Hospital, it is disappointing that the NSW Government has broken its promise to allocate \$150 million for it over four years from 2015, says Greens candidate and Deputy Mayor of Canada Bay, Charles Jago.

“While every dollar spent towards improving local health services is worthwhile, the State government has in fact only spent around \$10 million in this term.”

Despite public complaints throughout 2016 that the Hospital was deteriorating very significantly, the government did not allocate funds for the project until the June 2017 budget. Complaints included plaster falling off the walls, ceiling collapses, leaking roofs and finding a possum in an older part of the hospital.

Councillor Jago said, “People I speak to are grateful for the upgrade of about one-third of the hospital, even though the NSW Government has delayed it. But they also express deep concern about the development of the remainder of the hospital and its future capacity which is not yet even in the planning stage. The older parts of the hospital require urgent attention. The next government, whether Labor or Liberal, must make a financial commitment to the next phase of redevelopment within the coming financial year.”

Councillor Jago commented that both the delayed project implementation and its inadequate size meant that the hospital would not be able to meet the population's needs. “In the 2015 Stage 1 plan, the hospital redevelopment was supposed to cope with a projected population increase of 20% in 10–15 years based on 2011 census figures. In 2011 the Canada Bay population in was 75,762. With the population of Canada Bay local government area now over 90,000, the hospital's additional capacity is likely to be fully utilised even before Stage 1 is completed.”

“This growth in population is not an accident. It has been a deliberate policy of the NSW government to force increased numbers of new dwellings in each council area. While deliberately creating this high growth, this Liberal-National government has failed to plan and implement the services required by the future population.”

“Those funds are now urgently needed,” said Councillor Jago. “The next government must immediately allocate funds to initiate planning for the hospital's next stage of development for the hospital in the coming financial year's budget. Also, future hospital development must take into account the higher projected population growth rates, with much larger scale in future.”

“Concord Hospital is the major hospital provider in the Canada Bay, Burwood and Strathfield Local Government Areas, with significant inflows of patients from Sydney's Western and Northern suburbs. Yet again, major infrastructure required locally lags behind the growth being imposed on local areas by the NSW government.”

Current building work for Concord Hospital will include a new clinical services building for inpatient and outpatients in the Rusty Priest Centre for Rehabilitation of defence personnel, plus aged care and a comprehensive cancer centre. The government now expects completion in 2021 at a cost totalling \$341 million.

Charles Jago
Deputy Mayor of Canada Bay Council
Greens candidate for the NSW seat of Drummoyne and the Federal seat of Reid

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Also see <http://canadabaygreens.org>

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