

**INQUIRY INTO OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF
THE NORTHERN BEACHES HOSPITAL**

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Date Received: 28 July 2019

The opening of the Northern Beaches Hospital must have been dictated by the NSW Government's wish to get said hospital open as soon as possible so that Mona Vale Hospital could be virtually closed and readied for demolition.

There is no other explanation.

Never mind that the hospital was not ready, as was in evidence so quickly, with basic supplies not available, equipment malfunctioning and key staff resigning in sheer frustration.

Reports from patients of procedural failure, from lost files to inability to treat fairly simple medical problems, with the unforgivable occurrence of a patient having the wrong section of his bowel removed is indicative of a hospital in no fit state to receive patients.

Also of major concern was the botched management of road and traffic changes in the immediate area. One would have thought that it would have been impossible to make the traffic flow worse in this area worse than it already was, but the NSW Government achieved it. Changes to the direction of traffic flow (Frenchs Forest Road) were made twice with very little publicity and the constant changes to the two major intersections seemed more designed to confuse motorists than assist them.

It was particularly annoying the the relevant politicians, the Premier and Health Minister, constantly downgraded the problems and shifted the blame to others when the mess was clearly of their own making:

- this hospital was in the wrong location,
- its construction and that of the surrounding infrastructure was poorly planned
- a staged opening with Mona Vale and Manly hospitals remaining operational as the new hospital was brought up to speed was not carried out.