



A PERFECT STORM FOR GILMORE HEALTH CARE

Gilmore Greens candidate, Carmel McCallum, says that extrapolating the Turnbull coalition government's projected cuts could lead to the Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital losing up to \$135.9 million dollars, which will create a "perfect storm" for health care in Gilmore.

Carmel says, "The cuts to hospital funding could mean the loss of 82 hospital beds, or 151 nurses, or 85 doctors. This is happening at the same time as the Baird coalition government's decision to remove the requirement to have a registered nurse on duty around the clock for frail aged care homes will push vulnerable, elderly patients into the public hospital system, requiring ambulance transportation at all hours. The Turnbull coalition government's cuts to funding will drastically reduce the number of general practices offering bulk billing, which will, again, push people into the public hospital system. Crisis services like Headspace, for mental health care, and accommodation for domestic violence are being defunded, again pushing people into the public hospital system."

"Of course the federal government's mantra is that public hospitals are not in their portfolio, but in the state's. Their new dental plan also pushes patients into the state public system, where it could take more than three years to get attention."

"As if this isn't bad enough, the cuts will affect the rural doctors training at the Shoalhaven campus of the University of Wollongong, who rely on the Shoalhaven hospital for essential learning, so that they can help address the acute shortage of GPs in rural and regional areas. The callousness of these decisions by the Liberal and National Party coalition government is breathtaking! No families, no residents, no visitors to the Shoalhaven, will be able to be confident of receiving the care they need in a timely manner."

Carmel says, "This is the result of lack of careful planning, and government by 'thought bubble'. People will be even more disappointed with the Turnbull government when they realise the cumulative effect of all these decisions on the health of Gilmore residents, where, already, premature babies are air-lifted as far away as Newcastle for specialist care and Emergency waiting rooms are stretched beyond capacity."

The Greens' plan to increase the funding for public hospitals recognises the dependence of families on public help, especially in times of crisis, and recognises and supports the wonderful work being done by health care staff in extremely difficult situations. Only The Greens have the courage and vision to support universal health care as a basic right for all Australians.

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