

MEDIA RELEASE

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NO NEW HOSPITAL FOR NORTH WEST

Murchison MLC Ruth Forrest has described any proposal to build a new hospital on the North West Coast, an unnecessary and unacceptable waste of tax payers money.

"The Burnie hospital is less than 15 years old and whilst may not currently be able to fully meet the health service requirements of the entire North West and West Coasts, the current site can be expanded to provide such a facility" Ms Forrest stated.

Ms Forrest was responding to recent comments by the Minister in relation to the state wide shake-up of health services and her ongoing consideration of the Richardson report and implementation of recommendations from the report.

"Government should work with private enterprise to secure and expand this hospital and not waste tax payers money, up to several hundred million dollars, which the Government doesn't have, on a new facility" Ms Forrest stated.

Ms Forrest welcomed the review of services state wide, however warns against reduction of services to the North West region.

"If duplication between the two campuses ceases, and services such as public maternity services currently provided under contract to the private sector, at an estimated 20% profit margin, were provided within the public sector, significant savings would be made and the need to centralisation of many services at Hobart or Launceston, unnecessary" Ms Forrest stated.

"Patient transport services must also be reviewed as an integral part of this process to ensure all Tasmanians have efficient access to health services wherever they live" Ms Forrest added.

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For further information, please phone 0419879524.