

Executive Support Unit
MINISTERIAL CORRESPONDENCE – ACTION SHEET

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Reg No: MI 186234

DUE EXECUTIVE SUPPORT:
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ACTION OFFICER: MDO9

COPIED TO: _____

Response required: Yes No * Action Direct / Board to respond

Response signatory: Minister for Health Assistant Minister Chief of Staff

Closing contact details: Departmental N/A

Response Template*: A B C G

Standard Letter: _____

ESU Option Letter Number: _____

Redirect to: _____

* Templates can be found on QHEPS by clicking on Corporate Templates under *I am looking for* or from the tool bar click on Business Support, and under Administration click on Templates. Alternatively, in Word, File / New and then click on Qld Health Templates (in the task panel on the right hand side of the page). It is important that you access the templates from the website *every time* (and not use a previous template) as the templates are updated regularly.

Briefing note required: YES / NO

Briefing note template*: A B C

COMMENTS: Board to respond

ESU Contact: Deane Cochran

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

- Acknowledgement Letter
- Acknowledgement Email
- Acknowledgement Not Required

Department Ref #: _____

Policy Advisor: Vaun

RESPONSE:

- Minister
- Assistant Minister
- Chief of Staff
- Board Chairs *WM*
- Refer to Department for Direct Reply (**Action Direct**)
- No Response Required (**Note and File**)
- BRIEFING NOTE REQUIRED
- BRIEFING NOTE NOT REQUIRED

Re-Issue: _____

- Proposed closure of Barrett Adolescent Psychiatry Centre

Previous Dept Ref #: _____

COMMENTS / REQUESTS:

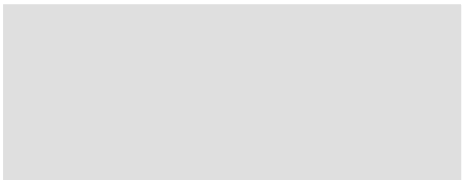
Reviewed by: _____

Date: 15/11/12

Courteney Hawkins

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 14 November 2012 8:30 PM
To: Health
Subject: Proposed closure of Barrett Adolescent Psychiatry Centre
Attachments: L Springborg BAC closure.let.doc

Please find the attached letter which is addressed to the Honourable Minister for Health, Mr Lawrence Springborg from [REDACTED]



14th November 2012

The Honorable Mr Lawrence Springborg
Minister for Health
Queensland Government
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Minister Springborg

Re: Proposed closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre

I have been most concerned to hear discussion of a proposal to close the Barrett Adolescent Centre. I am a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist who has specialized in the community management of young people with serious mental health difficulties over the past twenty-two years. I have done this work in Melbourne and London, but mostly I have worked in Brisbane. It is my view that Barrett Adolescent Centre has provided a vital service for severely disturbed adolescents in Queensland. Its closure would have significant ramifications not only for those adolescents (and their families) who might have benefitted from the young person's admission there, but also right across the child and youth mental health services, emergency departments, general practices and some paediatric services throughout Queensland. This wider impact is because the patients receiving treatment at Barrett Adolescent Centre have very high care needs and these patients would have to be taken up by other services, most of which are already stretched.

When interviewed in relation to this matter by the ABC last week, Ms Lesley Dwyer, Chief Executive, West Moreton Hospital and Health Services referred to the emphasis within the current National Mental Health Strategy towards managing patients with mental health difficulties in the community in services close to their homes. Her implication was that an inpatient facility such as Barrett Adolescent Centre was a relic of outmoded thinking and therefore not necessarily the best use of the funding. I wish to dispute this. I wholeheartedly support the emphasis of the National Mental Health Strategy on supporting those with mental health difficulties to live productive lives within their communities. However, the uncomfortable truth is that there are within our population, some young people with such severe and chronic psychiatric disturbance that they are unable to be safely managed and kept alive in the community by even the most well resourced and dedicated Child and Youth Mental Health Services (CYMHS), paediatricians and other health providers. I know this because I work at the front line; working in community CYMHS, trying to manage some extremely disturbed young people and to support their desperate families.

I have witnessed the improvement that has been possible through the Barrett Adolescent Centre, when patients I have referred there have been discharged back to my care in a more settled state, linked back into education or training and able then to

take up the opportunities available to them in their community. I have also seen the exhaustion and terror experienced by the families of chronically suicidal, self harming and psychotic teenagers, and noticed their relief when their child has been admitted to Barrett Adolescent Centre and they have started to see improvement. In recent years, most of the patients referred to Barrett Adolescent Centre, have had extensive treatment with CYMHS or private psychiatrists, and multiple admissions to the acute CYMHS inpatient services prior to their referral to Barrett Adolescent Centre. I have referred patients to Barrett Adolescent Centre precisely because community and acute CYMH services have not been able to meet that young person's extreme needs.

The closure of Barrett Adolescent Centre would mean that some young Queenslanders will not get the treatment they need. For some this will mean a lifetime of distress and unfulfilled potential. I fear that others will not survive into adult life because this is a group with a high risk of suicide.

I would be happy to discuss my views further if this was thought to be helpful.

Yours sincerely

A large, solid grey rectangular redaction box covering the signature area of the letter.



Office of the Minister for Health

Level 19
147-163 Charlotte Street Brisbane 4000
GPO Box 48 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia

19 NOV 2012

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence dated 14 November, 2012 to the Office of the Minister for Health, regarding your concerns with the closure of The Barrett Adolescent Centre at Wacol.

As you may be aware, from 1 July 2012, and under the direction of the new Queensland Government, 17 independent Boards have assumed accountability for the delivery of public hospital and health services that was previously provided by the Health Services Districts.

Each Board has enhanced control over local health service delivery and seeks greater local input from both clinicians and the community.

Accordingly, I have referred your correspondence to the Chair of the West Moreton Hospital and Health Board, Dr Mary Corbett for attention and reply direct.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Colleen Millér
Office Manager