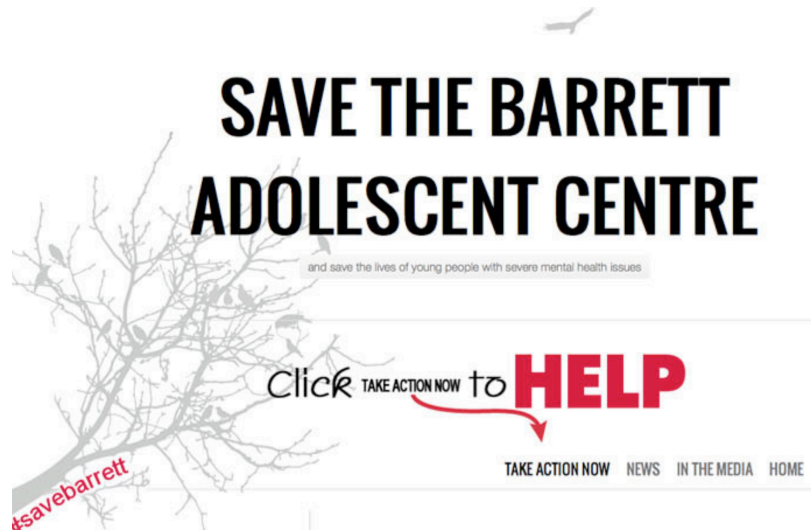


**CONTENT OF HOMEPAGE AT [savebarrett.org](http://savebarrett.org)  
IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO AUGUST 2013 CLOSURE ANNOUNCEMENT**



In early November 2012, a Queensland inquiry into child protection was told of the likely closure of an inpatient Adolescent Psychiatry Unit where young people with severe mental health issues have access to treatment, services and education. This followed the scrapping of the previous state government's plans to [relocate the centre to a purpose built facility at Redlands](#), with the allocated funds diverted elsewhere. As **THERE IS NO OTHER FACILITY IN QUEENSLAND that provides the long term and intensive therapy that is vital to reducing the suffering caused by adolescent mental illness and suicide**, an online petition was set up to urge the Queensland government to [Save the Barrett Adolescent Centre](#). Thankfully, the closure was put on hold while an expert panel was set up to consider the mental healthcare needs of Queensland's young people. The CommunityRun petition with its 4000+ signatories was entered into parliamentary records on 5 March 2013 along with a parliamentary e-petition with 1000+ signatories sponsored by Opposition Leader Anastacia Palaszczuk and the Member for Bundamba Jo-Ann Miller – who both continue to advocate to keep the Barrett Centre open. However, the Premier Campbell Newman, the Health Minister Lawrence Springborg and other members of the Queensland government continue to emphasise a move to community-based treatment (outpatient care from home) as well as

*'the inappropriate mixture of adult and adolescent patients as well as a backlog in critical infrastructure upgrades and maintenance the Government has inherited at the existing facility'.*

*(Treasurer Tim Nicholls, 12 March 2013)*

Those with a direct connection to the Barrett Centre can counter each of those arguments. They are clear that the nearby adult facility has never in its 30 year history posed a risk to Barrett patients, that the solution to concerns over the age and state of the facility is not to simply shut it down and that intensive in-patient treatment will ALWAYS be needed for young people with severe mental illness, whose family environments cannot provide the 24hr care so often needed and for those who pose a high risk to themselves and others.

**Whether it be in its current location or elsewhere,  
the Barrett Centre MUST BE SAVED**

(this text linked to 'Email the Politicians' form set up via CommunityRun)

**AND YOU CAN HELP ... go to the [Take Action Now page](#)  
and do what you can.**

**It is in our numbers that we can make a difference.  
*But we must act now. Before it is too late.***



Image linked to 'Email the Politicians' form set up via CommunityRun)

## CONTENT OF HOMEPAGE AT [savebarrett.org](http://savebarrett.org) – AUGUST 2015



In November 2012, a Queensland inquiry into child protection was told of the **likely closure of an inpatient Adolescent Psychiatry Unit where young people with severe mental health issues had access to treatment, services and education**. This followed the scrapping of the previous state government's plans to [relocate the centre to a purpose built facility at Redlands](#), with the allocated funds diverted elsewhere. As **THERE WAS NO OTHER FACILITY IN QUEENSLAND that provided the long term and intensive therapy that is vital to reducing the suffering caused by adolescent mental illness and suicide**, an online petition was set up to urge the Queensland government to [Save the Barrett Adolescent Centre](#). The closure was put on hold while an expert panel was set up to consider the mental healthcare needs of Queensland's young people. A CommunityRun petition with 4000+ signatories was entered into parliamentary records on 5 March 2013 along with a parliamentary e-petition with 1000+ signatories sponsored by Opposition Leader Anastacia Palaszczuk and the Member for Bundamba Jo-Ann Miller – who both advocated to keep the Barrett Centre operational. **However, on the 6th of August 2013, the Health Minister Lawrence Springborg, announced that the Barrett Centre at Wacol would close. The recommendations of the expert panel were not revealed – despite requests from media, parents and many with a stake in the centre's ongoing operation – until after the closure was announced and those recommendations indicated that experts considered the Barrett model of extended patient treatment and rehabilitation with on-site schooling ESSENTIAL.**

From August 2013 to January 2014, those advocating for the Barrett young people and their families met with Executives of West Moreton Hospital and Health Service (under whose supervision the Barrett Centre fell), Children's Health Queensland (the group with the responsibility for future adolescent mental health services) and the Queensland Mental Health Commissioner to stress the need for appropriate replacement services and the importance of a gradual, recovery-based transition for the current patients. The likelihood of patient suicide if such provisions were not in place was stated regularly and requests were made for flexibility of the closure date. However, despite all community and professional attempts to warn and inform, the Barrett Centre closed in January 2014 and, under the LNP government of the time, there were **NO PLANS** to relocate the centre to either a purpose-built or pre-existing facility.

**IN THE 7 MONTHS FOLLOWING THE CLOSURE, THREE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAD BEEN TRANSITIONED FROM THE BARRETT CENTRE COMMITTED SUICIDE.** Those who knew them and their circumstances strongly believe that they would still be alive if Queensland had a Tier 3 facility for adolescent sufferers of severe mental illness. But the rushed transition to treatment/residential options that could not offer the stability, security and wrap-around care of an extended inpatient treatment service with onsite schooling has meant that three treasured young people have died and their friends and families will continue to be impacted by such tragic loss in troubling circumstances.

A report into the closure and transition of patients was commissioned by the Director General of the Queensland Health Department in October 2014 but it **DID NOT INCLUDE** investigation of the treatment options that patients were transitioned to OR input from patients, families, education staff or post-transition staff. However it still found that there had been an artificial administrative deadline for closure and that the process had occurred within "an atmosphere of crisis ... with escalation of distress in a number of the adolescents and staff".

**In December 2014, the State Coroner announced that there would an inquest into the three deaths – however, it is unlikely that this will take place before the end of 2015.**

**In February 2015, the Queensland government changed.** After a protracted assessment of results, the Queensland Labor Party was invited to form a minority government (with the support on independent MP, Peter Wellington). Throughout her period in Opposition and in the lead-up to the state election, Labor leader **Anastacia Palaszczuk promised a Commission of Inquiry into the Barrett Centre Closure and the development of a new Tier 3 facility to replace the Barrett Centre.**

In July 2015, a Commission of Inquiry into the closure – to begin within months – was announced.

**Those affected by adolescent mental illness still await action on the commitment to provide a new Tier 3 Centre.** [The young people of Queensland and their families who, through no fault of their own, are forced to endure the suffering of severe mental illness were abandoned when the Barrett Centre was closed.](#) Localised support mechanisms are, of course, needed. But one (or more) centralised longterm residential facility with a team of practitioners and educators (specialised therapists, nurses, psychiatrists, teachers etc.) is the only way to provide the comprehensive care that is so vital in providing the foundation for a positive future for these young people and their families.

**The people who needed the Barrett Centre  
MUST BE SAVED**

**A new centre based on the Barrett model of care MUST be available in Queensland for young people who suffer with severe and complex mental health issues.**

**IT WILL NEVER BE TOO LATE TO FIGHT FOR THOSE THAT NEED A CENTRE LIKE BARRETT AND YOU CAN HELP ... go to the [Take Action Now page](#) and do what you can.**

**It is in our numbers that we can make a difference.**

**But we must act now. Before more damage is done.**