

# Royal Perth Hospital Protection Bill



## ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL PROTECTION BILL

Alan Carpenter and Jim McGinty have presided over Western Australia's failing public health system and they have long held reckless plans to close Royal Perth Hospital (RPH). RPH has been open for 153 years and is one of Australia's largest hospitals, with the second largest trauma workload in the country.

RPH employs about 7,000 staff members and treats about 73,000 in-patients a year, receives about 225,000 outpatient attendances a year, and has one of the busiest Emergency Departments in Australia, with more than 60,000 presentations a year.

Labor plans to scale back health and hospital services at the RPH site so that it has only a 190-bed block for elective surgery, and an emergency department that cannot be used as a major trauma centre for patients of serious road accidents.

In November 2007, the Australian Medical Association found that Western Australia had a shortage of 400 beds. To make matters worse, according to the WA Health Department, an extra 270 public hospital beds will be needed in WA because of the Rudd Government's decision to raise the income threshold for paying the Medicare levy surcharge. Western Australia needs more public hospital beds, not less.

Scaling back tertiary services at RPH will also seriously disadvantage people living in the eastern suburbs of Perth as well as those living and working in or near the CBD. No jurisdiction in Australia has closed its central-city emergency hospital, and Perth should not be the first.

RPH is ideally located for eastern suburb residents with a rail station at the hospital and with easy freeway access from all directions. It is also the ideal location for a major trauma centre. Despite this, the WA Labor Government has ignored the wishes of over 35,000 people who signed the petition to save Royal Perth Hospital.

Early in this election campaign, the Liberal Party committed to saving Royal Perth Hospital. A Liberal Government will transform RPH into a 400-bed trauma facility with a new emergency department and a new west wing.

A Liberal Government will also move immediately to protect the long term future of the Royal Perth Hospital by introducing into Parliament the ***Royal Perth Hospital Protection Bill***.

***The Royal Perth Hospital Protection Bill will ensure that RPH will be retained as a tertiary hospital.<sup>1</sup>***

Passage of this Bill will ensure that no future government will be able to close RPH as a tertiary hospital without seeking the express consent of the Parliament. Only a Liberal Government will save Royal Perth Hospital - and only a Liberal Government will legislate to do so.

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<sup>1</sup> "Tertiary hospitals provide services requiring highly specialised skills, technology and support to all of Western Australia. Typically a tertiary hospital may include centres of excellence, research and development and will provide a leadership role of integrated clinical services. As a general rule of thumb, a tertiary hospital provides services at a level 6 according to the clinical services definition." WA Health Department's September 2005 document, *WA Health Clinical Services Framework 2005-2015*, page 9.