

28 April 2022

**Attention: NSW Department of Planning and Environment**

**Re: Ramsay Clinic Wentworthville Redevelopment**

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am the Medical Director for the Adolescent and Young Adult Inpatient Service, Ramsay Northside Clinic in North Sydney. Regarding the Ramsay Clinic Wentworthville redevelopment, I was informed that NSW Department of Planning and Environment requested reduction in the overall building height. If this reduction were to occur, it would significantly decrease the number of inpatient mental health beds whose purpose is to service the mental health needs of Western Sydney.

There is a dire need for private mental health services that cater for adolescents and young adults in separate, safe clinical spaces. This is what the Ramsay Clinic Wentworthville Redevelopment will provide. There is no dedicated private adolescent mental health unit in Western Sydney for ages 14-17 years. The Ramsay Northside Clinic adolescent unit is fully occupied with an admission waiting time of 4-6 weeks. Many adolescents on the waiting list are from Western Sydney.

I find adolescents 'get it': that mental health is the biggest issue for Australian children. Despite best efforts, suicide remains the leading cause of death for Australian children and young people. We know serious mental illness often emerges in adolescence, treatment delays are common, a minority receive professional help and fewer receive optimal evidence-based care. Yet we know that treatments are effective for children and young people with psychiatric disorders.<sup>i</sup>

The proverb 'It takes a village to raise a child' is attributed to African cultures: an entire community of people ensures that children grow in a safe and healthy environment. I wish communities better 'owned' adolescents with psychiatric disorders. Children matter. The Ramsay Clinic Wentworthville Redevelopment as it stands will make a massive positive difference in the lives and mental health of Western Sydney adolescents and families. I hope you will support this crucial initiative.

Yours faithfully



**Associate Professor John Kasinathan**

**MBBS (Hons I; Syd), M.Psychiatry, FRANZCP, Cert. Forensic Psych., M.FMH, Cert. Child Adol. Psych.**  
Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist; Conjoint Associate Professor UNSW Medicine  
**Medical Director, Adolescent and Young Adult Inpatient Service, Ramsay Northside Clinic**

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<sup>i</sup> Kasinathan J. **Dig deep psychiatry, it takes a village.** *Australasian Psychiatry.* 2021; 29(4): 381-383.