

PCU075382

MY NAME IS CONFIDENTIAL

Do NOT PRINT

Department of Planning  
Received

9 AUG 2018

Scanning Room

20<sup>th</sup> JULY, 2018

DEPT. OF PLANNING &amp; ENVIRONMENT

EXHIBITION OF STATE SIGNIFICANT DEV APPLICATION

WAGGA WAGGA RURAL REFERRAL HOSP REDEVELOPMENT STAGE 3

APPLICATION No SSD 9033

LOCATION CNR. EDWARD &amp; DOCKER ST WAGGA WAGGA

LOT 334 DP 1190643

COUNCIL WAGGA WAGGA

CONSENT AUTH. MINISTER FOR PLANNING

Re Hydrotherapy Pool W.W.B.H.

Dear Sir / Madam

Firstly the Hospital is know Wagga Wagga Base  
Hospital

I have visited Wagga Wagga City Council  
and viewed Plans - as advertised The Leader  
Wagga Wagga a free pick up paper (18/7/18)  
Spoke to Ms Kath Taylor - Health Infrastructure  
North Sydney.

The original Plans showed a Hydrotherapy Pool  
Health Minister Ms Skinner M.P.

Wagga Wagga Base Hospital had a number of Acting  
General Managers.

Attended a meeting with the Arthritis group re pool  
with the then Acting General Manager Mr Denis Thomas  
and he just said NO to a Hydro Pool in the new Plans  
this is not what the people wanted.

The Pool was built by funds Raised by the  
community (Mrs Rumble & Ms. Mayra Cassie Hilton being  
the organisers Arthritis group) Now bulldozed with Stage 3



Page 2

The Hospital Hydro Pool was used by Physiotherapy Arthritis group - local groups - part of Rehab treatment. The pool was closed and an agreement with the Private Hospital (Palvay) and the Hospital would pay the ~~difference~~ difference (the Arthritis grp to use) the pool does not have a ramp ~~or for~~ and is not open to the general public to use.

Wagga Wagga City Council has a Hydro Pool within the Swimming Pool complex - it is not suited to everyone No Privacy - share pool - and people with medical conditions - Aspirates - What would be Ambulance Response time ??? It was not built for this purpose

Private Pool not suitable for high medical Rehabilitation I personally don't believe the people making these decisions have the best interest of Wagga Wagga Wagga Wagga has a population of 65,000 people and growing it is a City

To have High Medical Rehabilitation have to go to Newcastle, Sydney or Wollongong - this is very stressful for patients and families (being away from home for months) or the patient being denied the treatment disadvantaged

Why when we had a Hydro Pool built with funds by the community do we have to loose this vital service? when the need is required with Brain Injury - Accidents - Surgery etc

I personally have seen first hand the benefit of the Hydro Pool at the Spastic Centre now Rehabil Palvay Alliance where people have spent their lives in wheelchairs in the pool exercising



PAGE 3

their limbs just amazing

I have a cousin who is a quadriplegic (Brain Injury) residing in Wagga Wagga and assessed for Hydrotherapy because of his medical condition the only Pool suitable for his condition was at the Wagga Wagga Base Hospital - he has been denied because it was ~~it~~ closed.

I was refused by my Doctor to have Hydrotherapy assessed by Physiotherapist to have 10 sessions in the pool after approx 6 was then told I didn't need anymore - this was not what my body said.

A friend of mine had a hip replacement and had Hydrotherapy - then when he had the other hip Replacement he was told Hydrotherapy not Required I question if this was to keep the numbers down to say it didn't have the numbers? and wasn't Required

Mrs Karen Connors who was Mrs Rumbles daughter (passed away suddenly this year) campaigned tirelessly to save the pool and had approx 4,000 signatures given to The Hon Susan Ley.

I have over 3,000 signatures for a new pool at the Wagga Wagga Base Hospital

Yes we have a New Hospital but it should not be at the cost of losing the services that we had (being Pool etc)

I am enclosing copies of some of the advertisements in our local papers the last being February 2018 Breast Cancer.

If the Hydrotherapy Pool is denied and I cannot see a Reason why it would be I would like to know the Reason and person or company.

PAGE 4

I sincerely hope you consider my Request for the Hydrotherapy Pool at the Wagge Wagge Base Hospital to replace the one our community raised the money for - to service our city and catchment area

Yours faithfully  
[REDACTED]

P.S. The WWBH Redevelopment Stage 3 should be as a Forum for all to be advised both Day and Evening  
The Leader is a free paper and a pick up not read by the whole community = (hidden)

The WWCC Councilors voted at Meeting December 2015 that they agreed a Hydrotherapy Pool beyond Stage 3

Clipping attached Please Read

\* Please acknowledge Receipt



## NEWS

# Pool battle hits the brakes

BY ROCHELLE BROWN

From Page 1

It's been four tumultuous years of battling for several residents who have been campaigning for a hydrotherapy pool at Wagga's Rural Referral Hospital since 2014.

A new three-year agreement has now been struck for use of the hydrotherapy pool at Calvary Hospital, but health service providers say it is simply not enough.

Wagga physiotherapist Katelyn McGregor said there was demand for an additional facility and the current options didn't allow for enough time slots to fit around patients' schedules.

"If you have a large class the current facilities just aren't big enough, I've run three individual sessions this week alone," she said.

"You're taking over the pool and it can get quite overcrowded."

A spokeswoman for Wagga's Rural Referral Hospital said the Murrumbidgee Local Health District and Calvary Riverina Hospital had renewed a memorandum of understanding to provide



**SERVICE:** Marg Vonarx and Jill Tucker at the hydrotherapy pool within the Oasis Aquatic Centre. The pair currently run an exercise program for breast cancer patients. **Picture:** Les Smith

first-class hydrotherapy services to the community.

"This ongoing partnership provides affordable, clinically-appropriate hydrotherapy services in a state-of-the-art facility," she said.

"The MOU allows continued access for community groups and public hospital patients who will gain a therapeutic benefit from hydrotherapy."

Ms McGregor said Wagga

needed a permanent and bigger facility to accommodate patients.

"Quite often we have a patient who has trouble walking or who might have a chronic condition debilitat-

ing their life," she said.

"If you get them in the pool it takes away the body weight and you can do strength exercises you just can't do on land."

"People might not be able

to walk around the block but they can walk around the pool."

Currently, there are hydrotherapy pools offered at Wagga Swim School, The Calvary Hospital and Oasis.

Marg Vonarx, who runs an exercise program specifically for breast cancer sufferers, said the available pools had limited times and it was difficult to book for groups above 10.

"Oasis wasn't private enough for ladies who don't want to be seen with no hair," she said.

"There should be something more - it's extremely good exercise for people recovering from surgery, the elderly and people with serious injuries."

Fellow instructor Jill Tucker said privacy was often crucial for the type of people using a hydrotherapy pool.

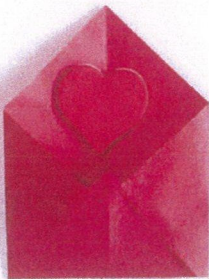
"A lot of people are using these pools at a vulnerable stage and when mobility might not be the best," she said. "They might be self-conscious of hair loss and discretion is so important, a public area can be inhibiting to people."

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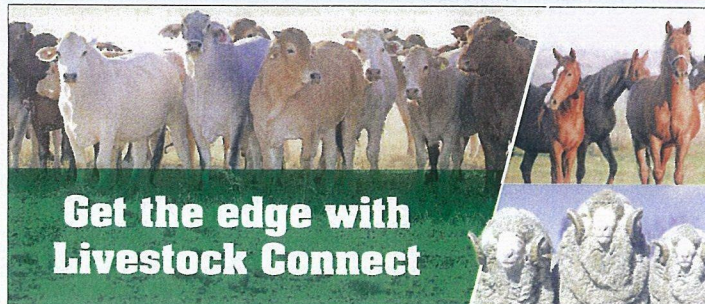
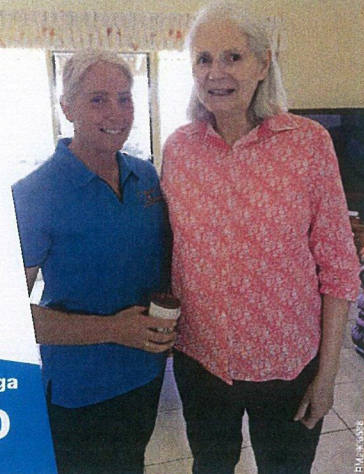
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# Pool's future still in the air

BY BRODIE OWEN

THERE are rumblings within one of the city's leading disability groups over unanswered questions and the future of Wagga's hydrotherapy pool.

Northcott Riverina manager Michael Merrylees has issued a "please explain" - a move bound to reopen old wounds for the health service and Wagga MP Daryl Maguire, who is reluctant to declare his support for a new public facility as part of the rural referral hospital.

Mr Merrylees said he believes the issue of the hydrotherapy pool has fallen off the agenda, fearing bureaucrats will leave the facility off the next phase of the hospital's reconstruction if public pressure is not applied.

"This is a community pool. If they have decided it is going to go, they need to outline the next options for the people that use it," he said.

"There are a lot of unanswered questions."

Earlier this year, Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) dropped a post-election bombshell on user groups, saying the facility would remain open on a "cost-recovery basis".

It meant user groups would be slugged \$55 per session, leading campaigners to believe it would be a death sentence for the pool due to decreased usage.

When asked by the *Advertiser* on Friday, Wagga Base Hospital general manager Denis Thomas did not confirm whether a hydrotherapy pool would be built in the next stage of the redevelopment.

In a written statement, Mr Thomas said MLHD was working with Wagga City Council and Calvary for "integrated" hydrotherapy pool services.

But the preference of Wagga mayor Rod Kendall is that the hydrotherapy pool remains open in its existing form, while Mr Merrylees said the Oasis was not designed for hydrotherapy patients and questioned the affordability of Calvary.

"What happens if you don't have health insurance?" he said. "What happens if you have a disability and on a pension? What happens if you are a senior citizen on a pension?"

Wagga MP Daryl Maguire encouraged Mr Merrylees to write to his office and said it was unproductive to "deal with issues" through the media.

"It's much better that nothing is said until the department makes clarifying statements," he said. "There are a lot of groups to consult with ... it's important that they get it right."

Plans for the next stage of the hospital are yet to be released.

14/11/15

dailyadvertiser.com.au

Page 10

## Hydro pool in debate spotlight

■ From front page

"Representatives of the relevant community groups have been advised of the options being pursued by the MLHD, which have included discussions with other hydrotherapy providers in Wagga. It is MLHD's preference that we work in partnership with (Calvary) to access clinically appropriate hydrotherapy services."

Calvary acting CEO Anton Reymont ruled out discussions of a merger, but confirmed "discussions with MLHD about extending access to the hydrotherapy pool for public patients and more community groups". "This of course is subject to ensuring our immediate patient needs are met, we are experiencing a high level of referrals since the pool opened," he said. The Calvary hydrotherapy pool opened in October and is used Monday to Friday by Calvary patients, as well as one community support group on a weekly basis.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Pool closure a farce

I AM dismayed at the lack of reasonable judgment displayed by both the Wagga Base Hospital general manager Denis Thomas and Murrumbidgee Local Health District director Jill Ludford if the reports in *The Daily Advertiser* that they support the closure of the hydrotherapy pool is correct.

If the facility is under used as they state, why not publicise the availability of the facility to the members of the public who would most benefit from its use? Contact members of the medical profession and appropriate support groups asking them to recommend the facility to their clients who would benefit most.

To suggest there is a suitable alternative in the city at the Oasis does little to enhance their credibility, taking into account poor parking arrangements around the Oasis, the long walk or ride from the available parking to the site of the pool deep within the Oasis, the lack of privacy many of our senior citizens and those who need to use the pool desire, and the large number of people using the various facilities at times, along with the possibility of additional costs.

Today is the first I have heard that the facility is under-used, the first I have heard that closure is being considered, and the community only has until Friday of next week to submit an objection.

Has thought been given to asking the community to support the

hydrotherapy pool financially after all it was community funded initially as were a number of medical facilities in this great city.

Brian Henry  
Wagga

## HYDROTHERAPY POOL STORY IS WELL WORTH TELLING

### THUMBS UP

THUMBS up to Leila Bright and her story in *The Daily Advertiser*, Wednesday, November 18 about her 18-month-old daughter Mia and her need for the Wagga Base Hospital hydrotherapy pool. Thank you Leila for making the time to tell

Mia's story to save our public pool.

### THUMBS UP

TO THE people who remember the real spirit of Christmas. It is about caring, sharing and being with those we love, not



## NEWS

Decision time  
on hydro pool

DECISIONS need to be made and announced in relation to the hydrotherapy pool at the Wagga Base Hospital.

The issue has been reignited and rightly so - by the Northcott Riverina manager Michael Merrylees who has issued a "please explain" in relation to where discussions were at on the future of the pool.

After a flurry of outrage and discussion, the debate has gone silent but there remains no final resolution.

The new referral hospital will be a wonderful facility - one which this community deserves.

But it needs to provide the services residents are accustomed to and need.

A hydrotherapy pool is one such service.

It is neither practical or appropriate to be using the hydro pool at The Oasis - nor any pools located at a private facility.

It's a pretty simple request and one which deserves clarification immediately - put an end to the speculation and make sure a hydrotherapy pool is included in the new hospital.

Rocky  
waters  
for hydro  
pool

THE future of Wagga's hydrotherapy continues to be in doubt, with Wagga Base Hospital general manager Denis Thomas refusing to confirm the future of the pool.

User group members were invited to a meeting on Wednesday, where they were told the pool would continue to be run on a "cost recovery basis" for the time being.

President of Wagga's Arthritis Association Lorraine Thomas was concerned about the future of the pool and the price users were currently being forced to pay.

Pool advocate Karenne Conners wanted a final decision to be made, questioning what "suitable therapeutic facilities" would be available should the pool close.

Mr Thomas said usage continued to be low.

"Consideration is still being given to alternative hydrotherapy and warm water therapy services available in Wagga, prior to any final decision being made."

## PUBLIC PATIENTS TO MISS OUT

If the pool was paid for by the community for the community by fund raising, shouldn't the hospital be reimbursing those funds or part there of to fund another community hydrotherapy pool elsewhere?

- Meg McCurdy

I have been paying to use the pool at the Oasis. Several hundred dollars for a year... nothing back from Medicare. Pity that the Council and Management have so much trouble regulating the temp.

- Ian McIntyre

Wagga desperately needs a patient hydrotherapy pool!!

- Franny Marzol

The hydrotherapy pool has helped countless people across our community. I couldn't be more thankful to those who work tirelessly to raise funds to get it up and running. Please don't close the pool. We need. #publicpatientwithhealthinsurance #savefacilitiesinpublichospitals

- Suzanne Evans

The people making these decisions obviously have no understanding of what it is like to be in a position to need these facilities under the public health system. It's services like this that make other medical bills that aren't covered slightly more achievable! When your daughter is born with a 1 in 200,000 condition that requires these facilities, the thought of losing them is upsetting! Let's save this pool!

- Leila Jayne

## WEB WORDS

COUNCIL JOINS FIGHT TO SAVE  
HYDROTHERAPY POOL

Why is it that Wagga has to beg and lobby for basic services that are abundant all over NSW. To suggest the Oasis as a substitute is just plain rude. It is a filth whole and does meet the needs of those requiring serious physio.

- Gary Witt

## LETTERS TO THE

## POOL PARKING PROBLEMATIC

I WRITE on behalf of Arthritis NSW - Wagga Support Group.

Many of our fine citizens, including some Wagga Base Hospital staff, believe the hydrotherapy pool at Wagga Base is no longer in use.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Our support group is running up to five supervised warm water exercise sessions per week.

Some of the sessions have dropped in numbers for a variety of reasons, including pool fee structure, the colder weather and the difficulty in obtaining parking.

The parking difficulties are acknowledged. However, it is less than helpful when hospital staff or tradesmen vehicles are parked in the one disabled park and three parking bays designed for hydrotherapy pool clients.

Our session times are Monday - 10am to 11am, Tuesday - 11am to noon, Wednesday - 8.30am to 9.30am and 5pm to 6pm and Friday - 3pm to 4pm. Leaving the designated parking bays vacant for use by support group members during these times would be appreciated.

Chris Thomas

Arthritis NSW - Wagga Support Group



# Different pools 'no match'

HEALTH  
BY ELLA SMITH

A WAGGA grandmother fears closing the hydrotherapy pool at the hospital and allowing limited use of Calvary's private facility is a "quick fix and will fizzle out".

Barbara Fuller's 15-year-old grandson is wheelchair-bound with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

Each week for the past six years, hydrotherapy sessions at Wagga Base Hospital's public pool have afforded him a rare taste of what it feels like to move his own limbs.

But Mrs Fuller believes a deal struck between Murrumbidgee Local Health District and Calvary to transport public patients to its private pool is unsustainable.

"I'm worried about it long term," she said. "It will be a shamozzle for physios to transport patients from the Base to Calvary. It's just not effective. It might be a starter, but I can't see it lasting."

Mrs Fuller said the Calvary pool was inaccessible for in-patients and their physiotherapists on a constant basis.

She also ruled out the Oasis as an alternative option

because of wheelchair hoisting difficulties and dubbed Wagga MP Daryl Maguire's \$200,000 Oasis upgrade a move that "completely missed the point".

It comes as other Oasis users hose it down as a suitable alternative to the hospital and fight for a hydrotherapy pool to be included in the next stage of the hospital redevelopment.

Kevin Wallace was at the Oasis last week when he witnessed a group of men hurl humiliating and sexist remarks about women using the hydrotherapy pool at the centre.

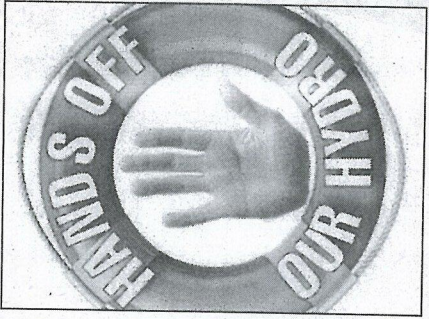
"It's hard enough for people using the hydrotherapy pool, let alone having people saying stuff about them," he said. "I just hope it doesn't

deter others from using it."

Wagga Health Service general manager Denis Thomas said vowed to "continue to work in partnership with Calvary in a flexible way to ensure the provision of hydrotherapy services for patients with a clinical need".

A hydrotherapy pool is not included in the \$170 million stage three hospital redevelopment.

## Hydro plans a 'slap in the face'



BY ELLA SMITH

THE Country Women's Association (CWA) has labelled plans to close the community-funded hydrotherapy pool "a slap in the face".

The stalwart group helped fundraise for the pool 25 years ago.

Now, they are backing mounting calls to save the public asset in the wake of reports it could be axed during the \$282 million hospital redevelopment.

"Naturally, we're all for trying to save it," CWA Riverina president, Ann Adams, said.

"It was one of our (fundraising) projects. It is a slap in the face for locals who raise money for these things."

"People have worked hard to have that facility there for everyone. To have it removed would be a very sad day."

Mrs Adams feared the Wagga community could feel discouraged to throw money at projects in the future if the government continued to pry public facilities from the very hands that built them.

The CWA hit back at mooted alternatives to keeping open the pool - which runs at an \$85,000 loss each year - by using the Oasis or a deal being brokered between Calvary and Murrumbidgee Local Health District to extend use of the private facility to public patients.

"(The Oasis) is not a good

environment for people with disabilities," Mrs Adams said. "You should be able to feel comfortable."

"It just needs to be (at the hospital)."

"You've got all ages from young people to elderly people and they shouldn't have to go out in the public domain (if they don't feel comfortable)."

The sentiments follow the launch of a new campaign to save the pool on Monday.

UV 500+ - United Voices of 500 or more stories on how the hydrotherapy pool helped you or someone you know - will be collated into a booklet and forwarded to politicians in a desperate plea to keep the facility at the hospital.

"It's sad it will be a Rural Referral Hospital and to think we won't have a service like this," Mrs Adams said.

"It would be a sad day for everyone."



## POOL CLOSURE AN INSULT

I WAS saddened and disillusioned, and also angry, to hear of the local health district's decision to close the hydro pool at Wagga Rural Referral Hospital, as reported in *The Daily Advertiser*, February 10 as a "cost-efficient option for the aging hospital pool."

Surely our new, beautiful, state-of-the-art hospital deserves a functional hydrotherapy pool.

The health service general manager, Denis Thomas, confirmed the pool had not been included in stage three of the hospital stating, and I quote from the *Advertiser*: "The pool is 20-something years old and has served the community well, but it is getting

old ... and it's in the way, if you like, of the overall development of the site."

I do not think this attitude justifies the importance of such a facility in the lives of those who are permanently confined to a wheelchair, or who have had joint replacements, amputations, or suffer from muscular/arthritis conditions and the like.

The argument that there are other facilities in Wagga to service these conditions is just not true. While each serves a vital service to the community, there are serious shortcomings.

The Oasis does not facilitate access to the water for those in a wheelchair as there are hoisting difficulties and no provision of professionals such as physiotherapists.

The local politician who proposed the government offering a grant for more disabled car parking spaces in that area completely missed the point!

Calvary Hospital's heated pool is inaccessible for in-patients and their physiotherapists on a constant basis.

The current hydro pool was designed and

funded by hard working professionals such as the late Horrie Rex and the hard work of a community which raised the money to build it.

This decision to close pool is disrespectful to all who worked so hard and made something that has had impact for so many years.

I find it difficult to comprehend how our wonderful long-awaited new hospital is planning to rely on a private hospital to provide the very necessary hydro pool.

**B Fuller**  
Wagga

26/2/16

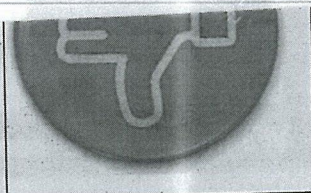
## THERAPY POOL IN A 'CASH SPLASH'

This facility is the responsibly of your government Mr Maguire, not the WWCC's. You are ducking and diving again. Glad the WWCC didn't accept your offer to aid the Oasis, for you would then close the hydrotherapy pool, which serves the people it was built for, including a relation of mine. Nothing is forever, what a great statement Maguire, you just remember it. Again Mr Do Nothing, you have excelled.

- DJR

Daryl fully knows that patients that require complete hydrotherapy treatment cannot use the Oasis. It was never designed to perform medical and physio tasks, another cop out by Mr Sydney, just a furphy thrown to the media so it appears he cares while at the same time he endorses the closure of the WWBH pool, but he is right in one thing he says, nothing last for ever, and hopefully your tenure as the state rep for this city also applies to his own statement saying. Also, whatever happened to the Kapooka Bridge rebuild, or don't we talk about that any more, and the massive job loss from Govt jobs in this city?

- Trowel



**THUMBS DOWN:** To those wanting to shut the hospital's hydro pool.

## Hands off our hydro therapy

### THUMBS DOWN

THUMBS down to Wagga Base Hospital management - hands off our hydrotherapy pool. The community fundraised some \$240,000 to build the pool.

We were never advised this important service would be deleted from plans before the state election.

I have friends affected by charges of sessions. (Contributed)

## HYDRO POOL QUESTIONS

Having worked in public health for more than 15 years, across three different states as an allied health professional, the hydrotherapy pool debate is not new to me.

What is new to me is the reasoning behind the closure.

The two main excuses I have heard are:

1. Lack of evidence: Hydrotherapy does not have a strongly researched evidence base to support its use. It is a very difficult area to research. But then neither does a lot of the therapeutic practises commonly used within our health system.

Yet we know these other therapeutic practises work by looking at the results. It is obvious. The same could be said for hydrotherapy. Yet for some reason, hydrotherapy is held to a different standard. Why?

2. Cost of running the pool: I know of two valid proposals that have been raised to save money within the health system, thereby allowing the hydrotherapy pool to continue.

They have gone unanswered, and unactioned. Why?

Given that facts that:

the number of people with two or more chronic illnesses is rising dramatically, and these people are living longer.

Admissions to hospital for symptoms related to chronic illnesses now outnumber those admitted for acute illnesses in NSW.

Self-management programs have shown to be a key component in the management of chronic illness, and the prevention of hospital admissions. Hydrotherapy can be a valuable tool in self-management programs.

Why ... with these things in mind is the Local Health District closing the hydrotherapy pool?

I would love to hear a satisfactory response.

**Claire Lawson**  
Koorringal



NEWS

DEATH CASE  
NOT CLOSED

P5

NEWS

ANXIETY A  
TAP AWAY

P6

SPORT

STATE OF  
LEAGUE

P48

DA

Weekend

## Advertiser

SATURDAY  
November 14, 2015

HIGH, DRY: Advocate Karenne Connors fears plans to close the hydrotherapy pool at Wagga Base and allow use of Calvary's pool will hurt public patients. Picture: Laura Hardwick

'Public patients to miss out under hydrotherapy pool talks'

## Murky water deal

BY ELLA SMITH

FEARS have surfaced negotiations to close Wagga Base Hospital's hydrotherapy pool and open use of Calvary's new facility will leave public patients high and dry.

Pool advocates believe it has been the intention of Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) to close its

current facility and forge an arrangement to allow public patients to use the new pool at the private Calvary facility for at least six months.

While MLHD hosed down reports the pool would be axed under stage three of the hospital redevelopment, general manager Denis Thomas confirmed it was considering a partnership

with Calvary.

Campaigner Karenne Connors, whose late mother Marcia Rumble was the driving force behind fundraising for the pool in the 1980s, implored MLHD to come clean on plans.

"It is MLHD's responsibility to ensure full access of public patients and outpatients to hydrotherapy

services ... and they seem to forget this," she said.

"It would be so, so sad if this pool gets buried. I fear that decision has already been made. It's time for MLHD to declare their hands."

It comes as reports MLHD were planning to remove the pool to save \$100,000 a year, but advocates argue a single patient could account for

half that figure in a year with a bed costing up to \$900 a day.

Mr Thomas confirmed the hydrotherapy pool at Wagga Base Hospital was open to a "small number of community user groups on a cost recovery basis" and was not utilised for inpatient clinical treatment.

"MLHD and Calvary

Health Service continue to discuss the best way to provide first-class hydrotherapy services to the community," Mr Thomas said.

"The discussions are focussing on continued access for designated community groups at the purpose built pool at Calvary Health Service.

Continued page 10

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# Fight for hydro pool lands in 'hot water'

## HEALTH

BY ELLA SMITH

HEALTH advocates have dived into battle against Wagga MP Daryl Maguire, after he declared upgrading the Oasis could increase hydrotherapy options to the general public.

It comes as Wagga City Council (WWCC) publicly joined the fight to retain the community-funded hydrotherapy pool by resolving to lobby the state government for money to include it in the hospital redevelopment.

It followed Mr Maguire offering WWCC \$200,000 to upgrade disability parking and security access at the rear of the Oasis - a move critics believe takes away from the real issue of axing a public asset.

"It's nothing more than a cop out," health advocate Craig Hesketh said.

"He should be making more of an effort ... not just deflecting responsibility on to someone else."

Mr Hesketh reported hydrotherapy pool user groups considered alternative sites, like the Oasis, inadequate because of limited privacy, disability access, privacy and comfort.

He also questioned the cost that would come of the deal being brokered between Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) and Calvary to extend use of the private facility to public patients.

Karenne Connors, whose late mother drove community fundraising in the 1980s and '90s to build the pool, praised WWCC for rejecting Mr Maguire's offer to upgrade the parking and access at Oasis to instead lobby for the pool to be kept at the



**TIME TO ACT:** Health advocate Craig Hesketh slams Wagga MP Daryl Maguire over his inaction to fight to keep the hydrotherapy pool at the hospital, instead offering money to upgrade the Oasis. **Picture:** Les Smith

hospital.

"The \$200,000 is just a band-aid on what appears to be a major haemorrhage," Mrs Connors said.

"I still believe the responsibility of providing hydrotherapy services lies with MLHD - not WWCC and not Calvary."

Mr Maguire moved to

clarify the money on offer to upgrade the Oasis would increase the hydrotherapy capacity for the general public, not public patients who were a responsibility of the health system.

"The health service is responsible for making arrangements for public patients and outpatients," he

said.

"With regards to the public pool, the money is to fix a deficiency in the original pool plan."

Mr Maguire stressed the clear distinction between upgrading the Oasis as an added option for people with a disability or limited mobility who were currently

reluctant to use the facility, and the future of the hydrotherapy pool at the hospital.

Mr Maguire had hoped if the state government upgraded some issues identified at Oasis like disability access and security, WWCC would address other concerns like privacy to increase use.