

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Inquiry into planning for SPIRE - submissions due by 14 February 2020

#### Key points

- Cart before the horse – the Palmer Street site for SPIRE (Emergency) was chosen prior to a Precinct Plan being developed for the future growth of the Canberra Hospital campus
- An options analysis should investigate the effectiveness of access to the emergency and patient flows around the campus for various sites, including Building 3 on Yamba Drive
- Garran residents have expressed strong concerns about the safety of school children from ambulance movements on a residential street, traffic congestion and parking difficulties
- Residents are concerned about the lack of consultation and clarity around the site selection
- A Legislative Assembly Committee is undertaking an Inquiry into the planning for SPIRE and the hospital precinct, and encourages residents to lodge a submission outlining their views

The \$500 million Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency (SPIRE) is a much needed acute care facility for Canberra and the surrounding regions and the WVCC supports its construction on the Canberra Hospital campus.

It is important that this acute care facility is located to achieve hospital wide patient flows as the hospital is developed to meet the health needs of the growing population. Effective patient flows improve health outcomes and provide a better experience for patients and staff.

In 2009, under the Your Health – Our Priority initiative, the ACT Government provided \$300 million to begin work on a ten year plan to support our frontline health staff in delivering cutting edge health services by providing them with access to emerging technologies and optimal capital infrastructure. Under this initiative the Emergency building was centrally located on Building 3 with access from Yamba Drive, there was a medi-hotel and a training and education precinct in addition to the ANU medical school.

In the 2016 election, \$500 million was provided for the emergency building which was moved to the current helipad site and named SPIRE.

In December 2018, the former ACT Minister for Health issued a media release announcing that SPIRE will be built between Hospital Road and Palmer Street, stating that the advantage of this location is the minimal disruption to critical care services during the building phase.

The range of old buildings on the site provides options to plan for the staged development of a world class health precinct. This could include the development of the 5.5 hectare former Woden Valley High School site for complementary allied health services, including a hydrotherapy pool.

Garran residents have expressed strong concerns about the proposed site's safety (especially for primary school children due to ambulance movements on Palmer Street), traffic congestion and parking shortages.

The broader community has raised concerns about the lack of a precinct plan to ensure the emergency building is sited in the best position for efficient ambulance access, effective patient flows and connectivity to the rest of the precinct, including the wards, parking, accommodation and green peaceful places.

The ACT Government's Local Community Reference Group has attracted close to 60 registrations reflecting the significant community interest in SPIRE. It is not clear how the ACT Government will ensure the Group is representative of the community's views given the site is not for discussion and the group will be reduced to around 15 people.

The Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Planning and Urban Renewal is undertaking an Inquiry into the planning for SPIRE and the Canberra Hospital campus. Submissions are due on 14 February 2020. For more information go to [www.wvcc.org.au](http://www.wvcc.org.au) and the Legislative Assembly website (link to website)

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