

For
the
Future

More beds
and doctors
for kids



South
Australian
Labor



Source: AdelaideNow

Acknowledgment of country.

We acknowledge and respect the Traditional Custodians whose ancestral lands we live and work upon and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and respect their deep spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to Country. We also pay our respects to the cultural authority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their nations in South Australia, as well as those across Australia.

Foreword

There is nothing more important than safeguarding the health and wellbeing of young South Australians – whether that’s our kids, their kids, or the generations yet to come.

Right now, the Women’s and Children’s Hospital – the State’s dedicated hospital for kids and families – is utterly overwhelmed.

There are plenty of stats, but the story that sticks with me is that of the Kayser family. Debbie and David are honest and hard-working people, raising their two daughters.

Mabelle Kayser was diagnosed with bone cancer early last year, and she’s regularly in and out of the Women’s and Kid’s for chemotherapy and surgery.

The situation is tough enough as it is, before grappling with a hospital that’s simply unable to care for Mabelle the way its doctors and nurses dream they had the time and resources to do.

When the Kaysers bravely shared their story in June last year, Debbie said “there have been times when she’s been screaming out in pain and just watching her... you can’t help. It’s not just disappointing, it’s disgusting.”

We’ve simply got to do better than the current Government who have failed to listen since over 200 doctors signed a letter of concern more than two years ago.

When I became Leader I offered my constructive support of the new Women’s and Children’s Hospital but it needs to be done right.

When we take a moment to look behind the Liberals’ flashy new drawings of the planned new

Women’s and Children’s Hospital, we learn they’re not planning more beds but one less overnight kids’ and adolescents’ bed.

One less bed isn’t going to give South Australian kids the level of care they deserve – not now, and certainly not in five years’ time when the new hospital’s meant to open.

Labor can and will do better.

A Malinauskas Labor Government will deliver 50 additional overnight beds at the new Women’s and Children’s Hospital.

We’ll also recruit 48 more doctors and 12 more specialist nurses to provide the current Women’s and Children’s Hospital the staffing it needs.

My team are putting forward policies that look beyond the four-year political cycle and focus on the next generation. We’re for the future.



Peter Malinauskas MP
SA Labor Leader



WHY WE'RE DOING THIS

Current Women's and Children's Hospital

Last November we saw ramping at the Women's and Children's Hospital for the very first time. It's a clear sign the hospital is simply not coping.

Under the Marshall Liberal Government, we've been hearing about increasing delays for children receiving the treatment they need – particularly in areas like cancer and mental health.

The hospital's cancer centre is near-constantly overflowing, with cancer kids sent to general beds where they can't access the right care.

Mental health presentations to the Women's and Children's Hospital emergency department have increased 49% since the Liberals came to government. Far too often, children experiencing a mental health crisis are discharged from the emergency department without follow up treatment plans in place.

Clinicians say they need urgent support to cover chronic levels of understaffing across multiple areas of the hospital. This lack of staffing is causing significant delays for children who need treatment and appointments, leading to long delays in the emergency

department and forcing staff to work unsafe double shifts.

The Australian Institute for Health and Welfare ranks the Women's and Children's Hospital as one of the top 10 worst performing metropolitan emergency departments for urgent cases seen on time, and the worst in the entire nation for semi-urgent cases.

Women's and Children's Hospital emergency department doctors last September staged an unprecedented walk-out, warning they were at their "wit's end" over the lack of resources.

Kids are waiting months to receive urgent treatment. Doctors at the hospital have reported six-month waits for children to access brain wave (EEG) checks – putting kids at risk of untreated seizures, brain deformities and tumours.

An obvious area of critical staffing need is doctors – with doctors at the hospital conducting an internal gap analysis that demonstrated an additional 48 doctors were required to meet patients' needs.





'Massively understaffed': Frontline doctors speak out about WCH 'crisis'

InDaily | 1 September 2021

New WCH

The Marshall Liberal Government has failed to listen to doctors, health workers and families on what's needed at the new Women's and Children's Hospital.

As a result, clinicians are warning the Government's plans fail to meet current, let alone future demand on their services.

Women's and Children's Hospital clinicians last year voiced substantial concerns about the direction of the delayed new hospital build. The Government's "Functional Design Brief" was rife with warnings from doctors, nurses, and allied health that the document ignored their feedback, was missing basic information, and failed to account for future hospital demand.

When we look at the Liberals' plans for paediatric and adolescent overnight beds, the Government is planning one less bed than at the current site.

Clinicians critical of new Women's and Children's Hospital plan due to bed shortage concerns

29 Apr 2021

ABC News | 29 April 2021

Paediatric & Adolescent overnight beds	Current WCH	New WCH
Paediatric medical	71	72
Adolescent (Medical & Surgical)	18	20
Paediatric Surgical	40	40
Paediatric Surgical 23 hour unit	36	24
Acute Mental Health Beds	12	12
Paediatric ICU	13	16
Oncology	9	14
TOTAL OVERNIGHT BEDS	199	198 (-1)

Girl's appendix bursts at Adelaide hospital after waiting eight hours for surgery

The Guardian | 12 April 2021

While the Liberals talk about more “treatment spaces”, these include areas like recovery bays from surgery, and not only the critical overnight beds needed for sick children.

A hospital staff “FAQ” document states that not all beds will be open on day one, instead opening “progressively” – indicating a potential further reduction in beds compared to the current site.

“It’s important to note not all treatment spaces will be open on day one of operations. They will be opened progressively as the projected increase in population and associated demand occurs.”

Source: SA Health New WCH FAQ 2021

The Government is claiming the new hospital will have room for future expansion, without addressing the blatant need for expansion right now.

The Liberals have suggested the Lyell McEwin will be able to take on some of the new WCH demand, even though the north’s services for kids don’t match the Women’s and Children’s and are also under pressure.

The Liberals have broken their commitment to open the hospital in 2024, with the current estimated completion date in 2027. Costs have blown out from an estimated \$1.4 billion now to \$1.9 billion.

Other jurisdictions are currently spending millions expanding brand-new children’s hospitals following a failure to accommodate future demand.

The Queensland Government in 2019 announced a 30-bed expansion to their three-year-old children’s hospital, while the Western Australian Government in 2021 announced an additional 20 beds for the new Perth Children’s Hospital, opened in 2018.

Despite these clear interstate warnings, the Marshall Government is refusing to budge – setting the next generation up for poorer quality care.

Emergency: Children ramped outside WCH amid COVID-coping fears

InDaily | 24 November 2021



50 MORE BEDS

COST: \$100 million

Labor commits to expanding the New Women’s and Children’s Hospital by an additional 50 beds for the care of sick children.

As well as more paediatric medical beds, this will include more mental health and cancer beds, both high priority needs.

This investment forms part of Labor’s commitment to 300 additional beds across the health system.

This will be a stark comparison between the two parties. The Liberals will deliver a new hospital with 1 less paediatric and adolescent overnight bed, whereas Labor will deliver 50 more of these beds.

This builds on the previous Government’s new Royal Adelaide Hospital where there was an expansion of 120 beds, from 680 beds to 800 beds in the new hospital, including an increase of 650 overnight beds to 700 overnight beds.

We will build this capacity now, rather than having to come back in a few years’ time when costs will likely be much more expensive for taxpayers and there will be disruption in expanding an already-constructed hospital.

We will listen to our frontline doctors and nurses in the planning of the new hospital to ensure it is truly a world class institution, unlike the approach taken by the Liberals where Women’s and Children’s Hospital doctors and nurses have said they have been ignored.



Source: SA Health, "New Women's and Children's Hospital - proposed Clinical Capacity document"



Source: ABC NEWS

48 MORE DOCTORS

COST: \$31.6 million

A Malinauskas Labor Government will add 48 doctors at the Women’s and Children’s Hospital, making sure our kids get the care they need.

These 48 doctors include 17 senior specialists, 15 advanced resident doctors, 12 resident doctors and 4 clinical academics.

This recruitment drive reflects the precise levels of staffing recommended from a gap analysis undertaken by frontline doctors working at the hospital.

The 12 resident doctors included in this 48-doctor package form part of Labor’s commitment to 50 more resident doctors across our public hospitals, at a cost of \$4.5 million.

These doctors will staff services including childhood cancer, cardiology, intensive care, respiratory, renal, dermatology, mental health and neurology, in addition to general paediatric medicine.

The Salaried Medical Officers’ Association, who assisted doctors to undertake the hospital needs analysis, says the additional staff “will ensure tertiary level care for our children, reduced waiting lists, improved teaching and training, and attraction and retention of our junior medical staff who now transfer interstate to achieve their paediatric medical qualifications.”

These doctors are additional to any activity growth in clinical staff already factored in the budget.

MORE SPECIALITY CANCER AND MENTAL HEALTH NURSES

COST: \$6.2 million

Labor will fund an additional 12 speciality nurses to fill much-needed gaps in speciality cancer and mental health services at the Women’s and Children’s Hospital.

These 12 speciality nurses will be funded from July 2022 to meet the urgent need for additional paediatric support.

This investment in additional nurses is in addition to Labor’s commitment to enshrine nurse-patient ratios in law, ensuring that hospital patients get the level of staffing and care they need.

Labor will invest in planning the long-term workforce needs of our state for critical clinicians including nurses. We will identify our state’s needs, gaps and risks, and plan for the training requirements we will need for services in both the short and long term.

