

[LETTERS@SMH.COM.AU](mailto:LETTERS@SMH.COM.AU)

Dear Letters Editor

Please consider this letter in response to two articles in the SMH this week:

Claims that ROYAL REHAB (Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney) are planning to evict residents from its Weemala hospital unit are false (Turfed from the only home they know, 13 August).

The statement made in the article that Directors of the Centre have acted in an underhand way is also false. The Directors of the Centre are volunteers who give freely of their time and expertise to support the important rehabilitation work of the Centre.

Like all Directors of the Centre, Mr Staveley (Hospital conflict of interest denied, 14 August) is not paid for his services. It is a pro bono position and he receives no personal benefit.

The facts of the project at Ryde that have been transparent from the outset are:

- We are redeveloping our site to enable us to keep our doors open for the future, the Centre is otherwise not viable.
- We are providing a world class new facility for people across NSW that will enhance services for people who require expertise in spinal cord injuries, brain injuries, burns, amputations and complex support needs.
- We are a non-government, charitable organisation that has to pay its way from its own resources. There are no taxpayer funds going into our capital works.
- ROYAL REHAB has always pledged to continue to provide the care and support that is needed for its Weemala residents. This undertaking has been genuinely conveyed to the families.

Yes, there is ongoing consultation on re-housing existing residents from the antiquated 100 year old hospital. And yes, it will take time before all the final plans are in place and individual needs have been satisfied.

The Directors and management of the Centre genuinely believe that the residents and their future care are a priority of the highest order.

That is why the families will be involved in making the decision on where their loved ones will be housed from a variety of options – including the option that up to 16 residents with complex care and high support needs remain on the ROYAL REHAB site.

Anyone who knows the current Weemala set-up can verify, it simply can't be reconfigured and re-equipped to do justice to modern standards. What is important is that the specialist services we provide will continue from a range of accommodation settings.

All residents will remain on the present site until the consultation process on future individual housing requirements has been completed and all appropriate housing has been sourced.

Yours faithfully  
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