



Zoe Daniel MP

Independent Federal Member for Goldstein

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02 JAN 2024

BY: _____

Hon Mark Butler MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care
PO Box 2038
Port Adelaide SA 5015

22 December 2023

cc. Hon Anika Wells MP
Minister Aged Care

Dear Minister,

Mark

Thank you for your correspondence of the 12 July 2023 with regard to the magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) services in the electorate of Goldstein, specifically Sandringham Hospital.

I am asking for you to reconsider issuing a new MRI licence to Sandringham Hospital. As you know this hospital is part of Alfred Health, which not only services its catchment of 770,000+ people but treats the most complex and critical patients in Victoria through its statewide and specialist services.

I appreciate the Australian's Governments commitment to improving access to health services including the historic \$6.1 billion investment in Medicare in the 2023-24 budget and the removal of MRI licence requirements in regional, rural and remote areas from 1 November, 2022.

While this initiative aimed to provide much needed MRI services in remote areas in Australia, I understand there have been unintended consequences with some private practice radiology providers moving their licences from rural MRI machines to metropolitan MRIs.

A prime example is the relocation of an MRI license from Bendigo to 'Imaging @ Olympic Park' which is a private provider (Capital Radiology) and now has two MRI units with full Medicare eligibility and one with partial Medicare eligibility.

Fair and equitable access to public health

A second full MRI licence at Alfred Health would benefit many Australians who are waiting for important and urgent diagnostic services.

Its three hospital campuses – The Alfred, Caulfield and Sandringham - operate integrated programs of care that ensure diagnostic equipment such as MRIs and CTs, are fully utilised and optimised to the benefit of all patients, not only a specific local community.

With its transplantation, trauma, burns, neurology and cardiac specialties, Alfred Health has state and national reach. The soon-to-be opened Paula Fox Melanoma and Cancer Centre puts its cancer and broader research programs on the national and international level.

A second MRI licence would support research and complex care at the same time as providing fair and equitable access, directly and indirectly benefitting more than 20 patients every day.

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In comparison with similar health services, Alfred Health is under provisioned when it comes to MRI licences (Royal Melbourne Hospital with three, Monash Health with four, St Vincent's 2), especially considering its critical role in the system. Its partial GP licence, while useful has limited applicability to Alfred Health's patient community.

Quality care: getting it right the first time

The high-volume work of the private MRI providers is fundamentally different to the complexity of the work and research undertaken at Alfred Health. It is not comparing like with like.

Alfred Health uses the technology to its maximum to solve more complex clinical problems for cardiac, neurosciences, orthopaedic and cancer care to name a few.

According to Alfred's specialist doctors who see patients in clinics in Mildura, Wonthaggi and Bairnsdale, the quality of the MRI scans and reports is often suboptimal for best patient care.

In some instances, these patients either travel to The Alfred for a repeat MRI or have their sub-optimal MRI reported by a subspecialist radiologist at The Alfred.

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Cost to public patients and the public system

Through the National Health Reform Agreement (NHRA), many patients will continue to receive free MRIs from public health services. However, public hospitals without licences will be unable to bill Medicare for these services, affecting revenue and service provision.

This is why providing licenses to health services such as Alfred Health is so important. It enables them to bill Medicare for the service while continuing to provide the diagnostic service to patients who legitimately require it.

It also supports patients who cannot pay for a private MRI and wait on the public system. For many with the constant rise in the cost of living, finding a spare \$400 is beyond them. This applies to many of those seeking an MRI in my electorate, whose only local option is at Cabrini Hospital which applies user-pays approach.



Zoe Daniel MP

Independent Federal Member for Goldstein

Benefit for all Victorians

I appreciate the Department of Health and Aged Care's investment in regional, rural, and remote areas. Alfred Health programs service many of these regional areas where MRI services are provided by private providers.

Sandringham Hospital not only services my own electorate but also the many Alfred Health patients coming from regional, rural and remote centres due to its regional outreach programs.

Therefore, an additional full Medicare licence to Sandringham Hospital will contribute to providing the highest level of MRI services to these patients.

Strong business case for second license

The business case for a licenced MRI scanner at Sandringham is strong.

FINANCIALS

Capital

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In summary, the Alfred's regional outreach, the provision of important statewide services, the opening of a new cancer centre and its highly specialised medical workforce provide sufficient justification for a second full MRI licence for Sandringham Hospital and Alfred Health.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter. I would be pleased to provide further information or discuss.

Kind regards,

Zoe

s47F

Zoe Daniel MP

s47F

Independent Federal Member for Goldstein

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s47F

From: Daniel, Zoe (MP Office) <Zoe.Daniel.MP@aph.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 28 June 2024 3:04 PM
To: mary-anne.thomas@parliament.vic.gov.au
Cc: Minister Butler
Subject: Letter, Zoe Daniel MP
Attachments: Letter, Minister Thomas, ZD.pdf

REMINDER: Think before you click! This email originated from outside our organisation. Only click links or open attachments if you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Minister,

Please see the attached letter from Zoe Daniel MP.

Regards,

s47F (he/him)
Head of Office
Office of Zoe Daniel MP
P: 03 9557 4644
E: s47F@aph.gov.au
W: www.zoedaniel.com.au



Zoe Daniel MP and her office acknowledge the original custodians of the land on which we meet and work, including the Bunurong | Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation. We acknowledge Elders past and present.

ZOE DANIEL MP

Independent Federal Member for Goldstein



Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Health

Via: mary-anne.thomas@parliament.vic.gov.au

28 June 2024

Dear Minister,

I am extremely concerned at reports of planned budget cuts affecting services at Sandringham Hospital in the centre of my federal electorate of Goldstein.

The hospital, under the banner of Alfred Health, provides essential services to the community; services which cannot otherwise be readily or easily accessed local residents in need of treatment.

The hospital is also in many ways the heart of our community. I doubt that any parent in the vicinity hasn't taken a child there with a sporting injury over the years. It is also a major employer and those staff, who are already bearing enormous pressure in their work, will now be very concerned.

I have been concerned since before my election to federal parliament about resourcing at Sandringham and have been pressing your federal counterpart to assist in the provision of a long overdue MRI machine to the hospital, for example.

Similar reports regarding funding of Caulfield Hospital are also of concern.

The Monash Medical Centre is not in my electorate, but it serves and employs many members of the Goldstein community. Monash is a critical public health asset and must be fully resourced to service growing communities in the Southeast.

I recognise that hospitals are primarily a state responsibility, but health takes no notice of the details of the constitution nor federal/state electoral boundaries.

These hospitals provide irreplaceable care to the Goldstein community. There are few higher priorities.

I urge you and the state government to assure my community that there will be no reduction in services and to reverse any decision to reduce financial support.

We saw the consequences for the people of Victoria when the Kennett government cut health spending in the 1990s.

We must learn from those experiences rather than repeat the mistakes.

A healthy community is a prosperous one.

s47F
Yours sincerely,

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Zoe Daniel MP
Federal Member for Goldstein

CC: Hon Mark Butler MP, Federal Minister for Health and Aged Care

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s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Friday, 20 December 2024 7:37 PM
To: s47F
Subject: Fwd: Letter from Alfred Health CEO [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: 2024.12.20 Letter to Zoe Daniel MP re MRI for Sandringham Hospital.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

FYI

Sent from [Workspace ONE Boxer](#)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: s47F @aph.gov.au>
Date: 20 December 2024 at 5:32:15 pm AEDT
Subject: Letter from Alfred Health CEO
To: s47F @Health.gov.au>

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Hi s47F

Hope you're well and getting ready to enjoy a break.

Please see the attached letter from the CEO of Alfred Health about the Sandringham Hospital's need for an MRI.

Zoe has spoken to Minister Butler about this a few times.

Happy festive season! See you in the New Year.

Cheers,

s47F

s47F

Chief Adviser
 Zoe Daniel MP

s47F

From: s47F @alfred.org.au>
Sent: Friday, 20 December 2024 4:31 PM
To: Daniel, Zoe (MP Office) <Zoe.Daniel.MP@aph.gov.au>

Cc: s47F**Subject:** Letter from Alfred Health CEO

Dear Ms Daniel

Please find attached a letter from Adam Horsburgh, CEO of Alfred Health regarding MRI at Sandringham Hospital.

Thank you.

Kind regards

s47F

s47F

Executive Assistant to CEO

t +61 3 9076 2449

e s47F @alfred.org.au

AlfredHealth



We acknowledge the people of the Kulin Nation, the traditional custodians and pay our respects to their culture and their Elders past, present and emerging. We welcome all cultures, nationalities and religions. Being inclusive and providing equitable healthcare is our commitment.

Alfred Health

55 Commercial Road
Melbourne Victoria 3004
Australia

Alfred Health incorporates The Alfred, Caulfield Hospital, Sandringham Hospital and Melbourne Sexual Health Centre

www.alfredhealth.org.au

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Adam Horsburgh

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20 December 2024

Ms Zoe Daniel MP
Member for Goldstein
677 Nepean Highway
Brighton East Victoria 3187

By email: zoe.daniel.mp@aph.gov.au

Dear Ms Daniel

Thank you for your ongoing help in securing future MRI services at our local Sandringham Hospital, which is part of the broader Alfred Health service.

We appreciate the Australian Government's commitment to improving access to health services including the historic \$6.1 billion investment in Medicare in the 2023-24 budget and the deregulation of MRI licenses in Australia from July 2025.

This deregulation increases the likelihood of providing the Bayside community with its first public MRI service: making MRI diagnoses available and accessible closer to home, for free.

As you know we are still seeking government financial support – Federal and/or Victorian - for purchasing the 3T MRI equipment, its installation and the associated building and engineering works s47G.

The benefit to the local Bayside community and the broader Victorian community would be substantial, especially considering the growing demand for MRI as the base level diagnostic tool for many different conditions.

The benefits of a new MRI at Sandringham Hospital would benefit local community as well as Victorians

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An MRI scanner at Sandringham Hospital would mean that the whole system would benefit and with improved flow through both The Alfred and Sandringham Hospitals and reduced waiting lists.

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Demand is growing for MRI as a diagnostic tool in many areas of specialist medicine such as neurology and cardiology, in addition to everyday hospital presentations.

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Alfred Health's regional outreach, the provision of life-saving statewide services, the opening of a new cancer centre and its highly specialised medical workforce are important reasons behind the case for the MRI scanner for Sandringham Hospital.

Thank you for supporting this important initiative, providing a much-needed service for many Victorians as well as the Bayside community.

Yours sincerely

s47F

Adam Horsburgh
Chief Executive

s47G

s47F

From: Minister Butler <Minister.Butler@Health.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 24 February 2025 10:46 AM
To: Zoe.Daniel.MP@aph.gov.au
Cc: s47F @aph.gov.au
Subject: Correspondence from Minister Butler - MRI services at Sandringham Hospital [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Letter from Minister Butler to Zoe Daniel MP - MRI services at Sandringham Hospital - MC25-900024.pdf

Good morning

Please see attached correspondence from Minister Butler regarding MRI services at Sandringham Hospital.

Kind regards

Office of the Hon Mark Butler MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care
E: Minister.Butler@health.gov.au
PO Box 6022, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

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The Hon Mark Butler MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care

Ref No: MC25-900024

Ms Zoe Daniel MP
Member for Goldstein
677 Nepean Highway
BRIGHTON EAST VIC 3187
Zoe.Daniel.MP@aph.gov.au

Dear Ms Daniel

I am writing to inform you that the Albanese Government will grant Medicare eligibility for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) services at Sandringham Hospital from 1 July 2025.

Sandringham Hospital was due to obtain Medicare eligibility for its MRI on 1 July 2027. However, I am pleased to advise that MRI services at Sandringham Hospital will now gain Medicare eligibility from 1 July 2025. Current arrangements have led to an uneven distribution of MRI services, and this change will ensure improved accessibility and affordability of services for patients in Goldstein.

The Department of Health and Aged Care will shortly contact Sandringham Hospital to make the necessary arrangements to provide Medicare eligibility.

Yours sincerely

Mark Butler

24/02/2025