



**Queensland  
Government**

Premier of Queensland  
and Minister for Trade

Please quote: DT06/SocPol

**26 SEP 2005**

The Honourable Geoffrey Davies AO  
Commissioner  
Queensland Public Hospitals Commission of Inquiry  
PO Box 13147  
GEORGE STREET QLD 4003

Dear Geoffrey

Thank you for your letter of 21 September 2005 concerning an email you received from Ms Deanne Walls about the Commission of Inquiry being extended to look into workforce management issues at Rockhampton Hospital. Ms Walls' email to you forwards her emailed request to me of 15 September 2005 requesting that the Commission of Inquiry be so extended.

In your letter you advise that the subject matter of Ms Walls' email falls outside your terms of reference. I appreciate Ms Walls' frustration, about Bundaberg Hospital being the subject of your scrutiny while Rockhampton Hospital is outside your scope. You provide me with four of the possible options available for Ms Walls' concerns to be dealt with. You are correct: none of them is entirely satisfactory, particularly to the Queenslanders adversely affected by what happened at Bundaberg Hospital, who want their matters scrutinised fully but as soon as possible.

I propose another course of action, to forward Ms Walls' concerns about the leadership style of the senior executive management of the Rockhampton Health Service District to the Queensland Health Systems Review (the Forster Review) that is operating concurrently with the Commission of Inquiry. From my appraisal, Ms Walls' concerns fall squarely within the terms of reference of that review, the purpose of which is to 'undertake a review of the performance of Queensland Health's administrative and workforce management systems'.

Indeed, the Forster Review's 213-page interim report, released on 2 August 2005, explicitly canvassed issues relating to the culture and management of Queensland Health's workplaces. In addition, the Forster Review's district visits included visits to Rockhampton on 30 June and 1 July 2005. (The interim report describes the district visits as including 'detailed assessment of systems, discussions with all categories of Queensland Health staff especially front line clinicians, and also included the community'.)

Executive Building  
100 George Street Brisbane  
PO Box 185 Brisbane Albert Street  
Queensland 4002 Australia  
Telephone +61 7 3224 4500  
Facsimile +61 7 3221 3631  
Email [ThePremier@premiers.qld.gov.au](mailto:ThePremier@premiers.qld.gov.au)  
Website [www.thepremier.qld.gov.au](http://www.thepremier.qld.gov.au)

In combination, the preceding two points strongly indicate that Mr Forster's final report (due to me by 30 September 2005 and to be made public) will reflect the Review's considerations of management issues at hospitals generally, and Rockhampton Hospital in particular.

In any event, I am today writing to Mr Forster referring him to the emails from Ms Walls, the subject of your correspondence and asking Mr Forster to consider the emails despite this late stage of his Review. I am today also writing to Ms Walls advising her of my proposed course of action.

My Government is committed to fixing the problems with Queensland Health, including problems at public hospitals, which is why we set up the Commission of Inquiry and the Forster Review. As I have said publicly, the reforms will be announced in a far-reaching blueprint, which will be put in place as soon as possible after we receive the final report of the Forster Review, and will be revised when we receive the report of the Commission of Inquiry, by 30 November 2005.

The blueprint will contain a comprehensive set of initiatives to drive the changes to culture and leadership that are needed at Queensland Health, both at central office and at its coalface, in the hospitals. These initiatives will likely include: a requirement that senior managers have the right set of leadership skills; binding performance agreements with senior managers requiring of them appropriate workplace behaviours; a heavy emphasis on leadership training; and a revamped Queensland Health Code of Conduct. These initiatives will be monitored and enforced on an ongoing basis once the blueprint is in place.

For completeness, you referred to a draft email from you to Ms Walls being attached to your letter. I am afraid that the draft email was not attached to your letter when I received it.

I trust my response to you satisfies the matters raised in your letter. Please advise me if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely



**PETER BEATTIE MP  
PREMIER AND TREASURER**