



13 December 2013

Dale Bramley
CEO
Waitemata DHB
Private Bag 93-503
Takapuna
AUCKLAND 0740

RE: NEW BIRTHING FACILITY FOR WEST AUCKLAND

Dear Dale,

The Maternity Services Consumer Council is writing to you to emphasise our concerns at the very poor birthing facility that the mothers of West Auckland are currently giving birth in. It is unacceptable that women in the west have not had a purpose built facility in which to give birth for many decades. While Middlemore Hospital and North Shore Hospital have all rebuilt their maternity facilities over the past 15 – 20 years, and National Women's Hospital was transferred to the 9th floor of the brand new Auckland City Hospital in 2004, Waitakere Hospital has been overlooked and appalling conditions that women have to give birth in have been ignored.

I have repeatedly raised the issue of this sorry state of affairs with maternity managers, women's health managers, general managers and CEOs for years but to no avail.

Waitakere Hospital's maternity unit is a dump. No amount of paint or carpeting can transform it into something other than a dump.

There is no room for families and no space for privacy in the current unit. Midwives and families have been complaining about this for over a decade. Mothers should not have to share a toilet. This is unacceptable in this day and age.

The maternity unit swelters in the summer and leaks in the winter. Over the years various members of the Waitemata DHB senior management staff have been taken to the unit during the summer to see how bad things are. Electric fans do not fix the problem. It is really third world conditions.

Could you please explain to us why the mothers out west should have to put up with this sorry state of affairs? Why the North Shore Hospital site gets a fancy new surgical unit, but women in the west continue to give birth in a unit that was built and used for old folks and is totally unsatisfactory as a maternity unit.

The MSCC is therefore requesting the Waitemata DHB to put a new purpose built birthing facility at the top of the list, and make it a top priority.

We are also requesting a timeframe for this.

Finally, due to the lack of action on this vitally importance issue the MSCC has decided to make a new maternity facility for West Auckland an election issue out west for the 2014 general elections. We plan to begin working on our campaign in the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Lynda Williams

Co-ordinator

cc Lester Levy, Chairperson, Waitemata DHB

cc Linda Harun, Child, Women and Family Services