

SUBMISSION BY: Leaving 24/2/04

MENINDEE HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL *ST*

“INQUIRY INTO LONG TERM STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE AGED OF THE AUSTRALIAN POPULATION OVER THE NEXT 40 YEARS – MENINDEE HEALTH ADVISORY SUBMISSION”

SUBMISSION SUMMARY

The Menindee Health Service facility serves an area including the town itself and smaller pockets of populations at Sunset Strip, Copi Hollow, Menindee Lakes Caravan Park, Tandou Farm and numerous pastoral properties.

The catchment population is approximately 800. A third of the township's population is Aboriginal with a 19% aboriginal representation throughout the entire catchment area.

The Menindee Health Advisory Council has consistently campaigned for an appropriate health facility to address the needs of all of the community, in particular the aged and disabled.

Currently in Menindee there is no in-patient facility offering aged care accommodation of any form and no respite care for aged and disabled persons.

The Health Advisory Council recommends the following requirements for aged persons for the current and foreseeable future in Menindee:-

- A Multi Purpose Service providing six beds:
 - Four beds are permanently designated for aged care and/or respite care for the aged and disabled;
 - Two beds designated for observation of patients;
- Four Home Units for independent living established over the next 5-10 years;
- Aged Day Care programme and purpose room incorporated in Multi Purpose Service.
- Financial assistance for socially disadvantaged families attempting to care for aged family members (e.g. structural changes to bathrooms).
- Maintaining and expanding as necessary the in-home services currently being provided in Menindee.

and there is a waiting list for future tenants. The homes will soon need major refurbishment or alternative accommodation will be needed;


- The building site chosen for a new proposed Primary Health Care facility would accommodate expansion to a Multi Purpose Service and additional home units. The chosen site is central to the town and adjacent to the existing Menindee Homes for Aged and Disabled;
- Members of the aboriginal aged population have already experienced the pain of separation from family members. It seems extremely insensitive to separate them again from families in their declining years.

The Menindee Health Advisory Council feels very strongly that Menindee and area's circumstances are exceptional and that greater consideration should be given to that fact.

Whatever future actions are taken, the aged and disabled persons need to be treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve.

Rick Doyle
Facilitator
Menindee Health Advisory Council

Enc.

 23-02-04

A P P E N D I C E S

- a. Letter from Mr Tony Lawler MP (Federal Member for Parkes) to Menindee Health Service dated 16 July 2001.
- b. Letter from Ms Nyoli Bell to Ms Sally Josh (Far West Area Health Service) dated 8 April 2002.
- c. Letter from Ms Julia Brooks (Menindee Health Advisory Council) to Mr John Cobb MP (Federal Member for Parkes, National Party of Australia) dated 25 September 2002.
- d. Letter from Cathy Dwyer (Far West Area Health Service) to Ms Julia Brooks (Menindee Health Advisory Council) dated 2 October 2002.
- e. Letter from Ms Julia Brooks (Menindee Health Advisory Council) to Mr Peter Black MP (Member for Murray-Darling) dated 7 November 2002.
- f. Letter from Mr Peter Black MP (Member for Murray-Darling) to Ms Julia Brooks (Menindee Health Advisory Council) dated 13 November 2002.
- g. Letter by Mr John Cobb MP (Federal Member for Parkes, National Party of Australia) "in support of the endeavours of the Menindee Health Advisory Council" dated 13 November 2002.
- h. Letter from Mr Craig Knowles MP (Minister for Health, New South Wales) to Mr Peter Black MP (Member for Murray Darling) dated 10 January 2003.
- i. Letter from Mr John Cobb MP (Federal Member for Parkes, National Party of Australia) to Mrs Donna Files (Menindee Health Advisory Council) dated 23 May 2003.
- j. Letter from Mrs Donna Files (Menindee Health Advisory Council) to Mr John Cobb MP (Federal Member for Parkes, National Party of Australia) dated 24 April 2003.
- k. Letter from Ms Jodie Doodt (Minister for Ageing) to Mr John Cobb MP (Federal Member for Parkes, National Party of Australia) dated 10 June 2003.
- l. Letter from Mr John Cobb MP (Federal Member for Parkes, National Party of Australia) to Mr R Doyle (Menindee Health Advisory Council) dated 8 August 2003.
- m. Letter from The Hon Trish Worth MP (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, Member for Adelaide) to Mr John Cobb MP (Federal Member for Parkes, National Party of Australia) dated 18 July 2003.
- n. Letter from Mr John Cobb MP (Federal Member for Parkes, National Party of Australia) to Mr R Doyle (Menindee Health Advisory Council) dated 24 October 2003.
- o. Letter from The Hon Trish Worth MP (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, Member for Adelaide) to Mr John Cobb MP (Federal Member for Parkes, National Party of Australia) dated 3 October 2003.
- p. Menindee Health Advisory Council records as at 18 February 2004.
- q. Sunset Strip statistics as at 23 February 2004.



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TONY LAWLER, B.Pharm., M.P.
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PARKES



AJM

16 July 2001

Marie Kelly and Nyoli Bell
Menindee Health Service
MENINDEE NSW 2879

Dear Marie and Nyoli

Thanks for taking time out of your busy schedules to speak to John Cobb and myself in Menindee recently.

You raised a range of important issues which we discussed with the Menindee Food and Fibre, after speaking with you.

I have written to the Minister for Health and the CEO of the Far Western Area Health Services, requesting information on both the status of the health centre, as far as an upgrade goes, and also the possibility of establishing a multi purpose health centre in Menindee.

Clearly there needs to be a pulling together of all the services in the town to deliver the best benefits for the community.

I must admit there is not a clear picture in my mind, having also discussed with Nyampa the services that they provide, including all the issues that the community itself will have to work through to establish its own priorities.

We will provide you with copies of the responses that we receive from the Minister and the Far Western Area Health Service, and I would appreciate it, if you had the time, to provide your comments on those responses.

Yours sincerely

Tony Lawler

TONY LAWLER, MP
Federal Member for Parkes

P.S. Shere has an application in to try for funding for the air strip regards Tony

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Nyoli Bell
Bono Station
Via Menindee NSW 2879

8 April 2002

Ms Sally Josh
Far West Area Health Service
Broken Hill NSW 2880

Dear Sally

After reading the 'Draft Menindee Service Plan March 13 2002- 1st Draft, I would like to make the following comments.

Whilst I am very grateful for the acknowledgment given to the Menindee community's health needs, I feel there are serious shortcomings for the community in this first draft.

Recommendations for the aged and disabled do not include the option of offering respite and hostel care in the new facility. This issue was raised at the Menindee HAC Planning meetings and yet it has been omitted.

Local staff have estimated that four community people currently receiving home care, will need a hostel place in the next few years and there is no provision for this in Menindee. The draft also mentions that "with increasing numbers of older people in the community, services for the frail/aged and disabled will be in increasing demand".

Correspondence in August 2001, from Senator the Hon Grant Tambling to Mr Tony Lawler, stated that "a Multi Purpose Service program is a joint program where the Commonwealth pools flexible aged care funding with the State health service funds in a manner most appropriate to the operating realities of small rural health and aged care facilities. The Program works best in small towns that cannot maintain a stand alone aged care facility and where integration of the services is the most sensible option to allow sustainability of the service. Importantly it is designed to help communities whose catchment area is such that the call on the aged care services is uneven or sporadic. The cashing out aspect provides certainty in funding, irrespective of the actual call on services."

Significantly, in the 'Earlier Discharge Forum record of discussions, October 2000, participants from rural and remote communities talked about the transitional gap that evolves between hospital acute care to home.

Surely if a Multi Purpose Service Program operated at Menindee, the aged and disabled people would be better looked after and there would be an opportunity for rehabilitation for Menindee patients with family and /or friends to be close by complimented by the chance for their carer/s to familiarise and learn the skills needed for care recipients.

The FWAHS has justified the absence of an in-patient facility at Menindee by the number of Menindee patients being admitted to the Broken Hill hospital over the past five years. These figures do not take into account the fact patients may be admitted to another facility, nor does it consider the needs of the projected population growth for the area.

A reference was made in the draft to several hundred people coming into the area as itinerant workers. This figure is grossly underestimated. Information is available from Tandou operations and similar horticultural interests in Menindee and none of that appears to be acknowledged in this draft. Reference was made to the Tandou farm site south west of Menindee and its population not being counted in the catchment population for planning of the health facility. That is difficult to understand when the Menindee Health Service actually provides Primary Health Care Programmes for those permanent and transient residents. Why would the needs of that population not be included?

The proposed public bus system from Broken Hill to Menindee is a proposal that will not offer respite or rehabilitation care to any Menindee community member nor will it offer continuity of patient care required for a person that needs observation for longer than four hours. No costing is given for the proposed consumer or consideration given to the expense involved whilst at Broken Hill or the disruption to family life and work commitments.

The description of private car travel from Menindee to Broken Hill does not mention the added danger of kangaroos along the trip, the fact there is no mobile phone range for most of the journey or no houses or businesses to stop at if in trouble.

Ms J Brooks
Facilitator
Menindee Health Advisory Council
PO Box 25
Menindee NSW 2879

Mr John Cobb
Member for Parkes
Suite 3
153 Brisbane St
DUBBO NSW 2830

25th September 2002

Dear Mr Cobb

The Menindee Health Advisory Council is seeking your support for issues in the development of a new health facility servicing Menindee and surrounding areas.

After your visit to Menindee with Mr Tony Lawler in mid 2001, we believe you understood the real dilemma faced by the community with the current health facility.

Council members are pleased to inform you that the Far West Area Health Service has been able to secure some funding for a new facility on a different site to that which is currently being used. The location site is yet to be determined.

The procured funding, however, only provides a facility, classified as a **level 2a service**. Essentially this is a **tier 2 Health Centre** and provides a local service for Primary Health.

The council members, as community representatives, have continually **campaign**ed for an adaptation of the **Multi-Purpose Service programme** that would better serve the diverse needs of the community.

Members have repeatedly asked the Far West Area Health Service to be proactive in addressing the problems of **no respite care being available for the carers in the town, no residential care for the aged or handicapped or a facility for patient observation, not requiring acute care. An adaptation of a MPS could service those needs.**

Throughout the consultation process, Far West Area Health Service has acknowledged the issues of respite care and aged accommodation but only as a possible expansion in the future.

The Health Advisory Council's recommendations to the Far West Area Health Service are continually rejected on the basis that documented figures do not fit the criteria required for further consideration.

Council members feel very strongly that Menindee and area's circumstances are exceptional and that greater consideration should be given to that.

FAR WEST AREA HEALTH SERVICE

serving remote nsw

Our Ref 711

Ms Julia Brooks
Menindee Health Advisory Council
PO Box 25
MENINDEE NSW 2879

Dear Ms Brooks

Thank you for your letter dated 25 September 2002 on behalf of the Menindee Health Advisory Council (HAC) regarding the draft Menindee Capital Works Plan. The Far West Area Health Service (FWAHS) appreciates the time the Menindee HAC is investing in the new facility for Menindee and we welcome the opportunity to discuss issues surrounding this new facility with you.

I am sorry that representatives from both the Area and Sector offices were unable to attend the September HAC meeting due to last minute commitments elsewhere which made attendance impossible. I hope that our apologies were conveyed to the meeting by the Menindee Health Service Manager as was requested. I understand the Lower Western Sector General Manager will be on leave at the time of your October meeting and I am also unable to attend your October meeting as I will be attending the Goodooga HAC meeting that evening. However I would be happy to address your questions, and discuss the HAC's letter in response to the draft Service Plan, at your November meeting.

As was discussed with HAC member Nyoli Bell when she called on behalf of the HAC after the last meeting, while the FWAHS acknowledges the HAC's hesitance about making a decision to endorse the draft capital works plan before a site is chosen, the site and the planning process for capital works should be considered to be 2 distinct decisions to be made. The capital works plans seeks your endorsement of the conceptual framework for the new facility. This facility will then be built on whatever site is ultimately chosen, but it has been designed to fit any of the shortlisted sites. The HAC will be intimately involved in the detailed planning of the facility after the capital works plan has been submitted and endorsement of the capital works plan initiates this detailed design phase.

The FWAHS has forwarded the updated Service Plan (as at September) and the draft capital works plan to the Health Department to initiate discussions regarding funding, as the required amount flagged in the capital works plan is in excess of what is currently available through the previously identified funding channels.



INCORPORATING:

the Health Services of Balranald, Bourke, Brewarrina, Broken Hill, Collarenebri, Goodooga, Ivanhoe, Lightning Ridge, Menindee, Tibooburra, Walgett, Wentworth and Wilcannia.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

University of Sydney Department of Rural Health – Broken Hill, Maari Ma Aboriginal Health Corporation and the Royal Flying Doctor Service (South Eastern Section).

Please address all correspondence to: Chief Executive Officer, PO Box 457, BROKEN HILL 2880
Telephone: (08) 8080 1333 Facsimile: (08) 8080 1682



Ms J Brooks
Facilitator
Menindee Health Advisory Council
PO Box 25
Menindee NSW 2879

Mr Peter Black
Member for Murray-Darling
32 Sulphide St
Broken Hill NSW 2880

7 November 2002

Dear Mr Black

The Menindee Health Advisory Council is extremely grateful to you for giving your time towards our concerns with the new, proposed health facility.

During your visit to the Minister, Mr Craig Knowles, we would appreciate his special consideration of the following points.

The Far West Area Health Service incorrectly quotes population figures, both permanent and transient.

Population figures submitted by the Far West Area Health Service **do not include people living in the CCDs 100202002, 1020208 (Tandou Farm community) or people from pastoral properties in CCDs 1021009 and 1020907.**

During peak work periods, **Table Grape Growers employ double the figures given.**

FWAHS did not realise that there are two properties owned in Menindee with the same work forces. (casual and permanent)

No credence is given to the **number of residents at the various caravan parks** in the area.

Menindee has been ranked the **second highest on the social disadvantage scale** for the whole of NSW, excluding Sydney. (as documented in the Menindee Service Plan)

There are up to **20 disabled people in Menindee with carers** and there has been **no immediate provision in the new facility to provide respite care of any form.**

Aged people, aboriginal and non-aboriginal will still have to **move away from the area for full time care.** The minimum distance away will be to Broken Hill (110km), where there is already a shortage of places for clients.

A golden opportunity exists for increasing **employment and training (nursing)** for the local community if **accommodation** for respite and aged care is included in the new facility.

Yours sincerely

Ms Julia Brooks



Parliament of New South Wales,
Legislative Assembly

PETER L. BLACK, OAM, MP

Member for Murray Darling

November 13, 2002

Ms. Julia Brooks,
Facilitator,
Menindee Health Advisory Council,
P.O. Box 25,
MENINDEE N.S.W. 2879

Subject: Central Darling Shire – Menindee Health Advisory Council, Health Facility

Dear Julia,

Thank you for your correspondence received by my office on November 11, 2002, subject as above.

A copy of your correspondence has been forwarded to the Hon. Craig Knowles, Minister for Health, for advice and upon receipt of same I will be in further contact.

Again, thank you.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Peter L. Black'.

PETER L. BLACK, OAM, MP

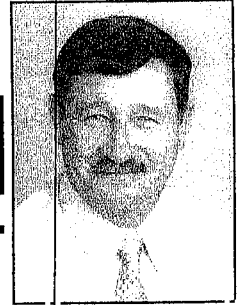
*The Globe Building, 1/142 Argent Street,
BROKEN HILL N.S.W. 2880*

*Telephone: (08) 8087 3315
Facsimile: (08) 8087 1796*



JOHN COBB MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PARKES
National Party of Australia



13 November 2002

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This letter is in support of the endeavours of the Menindee Health Advisory Council to access funding to address respite services and aged care residential care services in order to provide better support to the carers and the community of Menindee.

In mid 2001, and prior to my election as Member for Parkes, my predecessor Tony Lawler and I and members of the Menindee Health Advisory Council, had discussions about delivering meaningful health care to the community.

I, and the then Member for Parkes, believe that there is indeed a need for a Multi Purpose Service (MPS) program in Menindee.

Menindee is an isolated town in far west N.S.W., with a catchment area of population of about 800. Added to this is a high itinerant population due to seasonal working in the horticultural industry as well as residents at the "holiday" areas, estimated to be around 400.

Menindee has few services and was unfortunately classified in 1999 as being the second most socially disadvantaged town in N.S.W., outside of Sydney.

Menindee has an ageing population and concern has been expressed that services for the elderly are not keeping pace with the demand.

A huge lode is placed on the service in Menindee, but something must be done about addressing the fact that there is no respite care available, no residential care for the aged and handicapped, or room available for patients not requiring acute care.

A MPS in Menindee could overcome this requirement and I support all endeavours to implement these facilities.

Yours sincerely

JOHN COBB, MP
Federal Member for Parkes

Country Answers for Country People

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NEW SOUTH WALES

MINISTER FOR HEALTH

15 JAN 2003

COPY

Mr Peter Black MP
Member for Murray Darling
1/142 Argent Street
BROKEN HILL NSW 2880

M02/7404

19 JAN 2003

Dear Mr Black

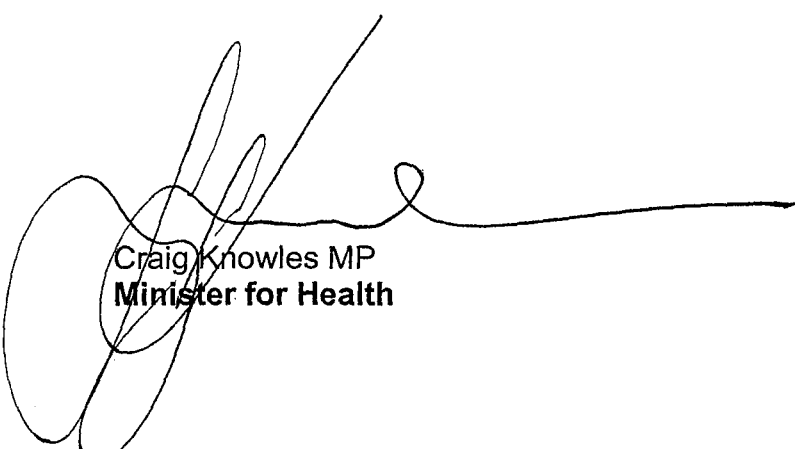
I refer to your representations on behalf of Ms Julia Brooks, Facilitator of the Menindee Health Advisory Council (HAC), PO Box 25, Menindee, NSW 2879, concerning the population figures used in the Menindee Service Plan prepared for the proposed new Menindee Health facility and respite care in Menindee.

While further detail has been given to the HAC's argument regarding the population figures utilised to determine the role delineation for the proposed new facility, the response in my recent letter regarding this issue remains the same. Even if these figures were to be a substantial underestimate, and I am advised the Far West Area Health Service does not believe them to be, it is unlikely that an acute facility at Menindee would be viable.

With regard to access to respite care for Menindee carers, I have asked the Area Health Service to write to the Far West Care Respite Centre on behalf of the Menindee community. While the Carer Respite Centre network is a Commonwealth funded service, if access to respite care is insufficient in Menindee, the Area Health Service is happy to advocate on behalf of Menindee's carers.

Thank you for bringing Ms Brooks concerns to my attention. Should Ms Brooks have any further questions regarding the proposed Menindee facility, please advise her to contact Ms Heather Gray, FWAHS Chief Executive Officer, on (08) 8080 1469.

Yours sincerely



Craig Knowles MP
Minister for Health



JOHN COBB MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PARKES
National Party of Australia



PLEASE REPLY TO BROKEN HILL OFFICE

23 May 2003

Mrs. Donna Files
Menindee Health Advisory Council
P.O. Box 25
MENINDEE. 2879

Dear Mrs. Files

Reference is made to your letter and the discussions I had with the group in Menindee, regarding Aged and Respite accommodation in the proposed new health facility for Menindee.

I have now contacted Senator the Hon. K. Patterson, Federal Minister for Health and Ageing regarding the situation in Menindee.

I have recommended to the Minister, the consideration of a Multi Purpose Service for Menindee and when I receive her reply I will forward a copy on to you.

Yours sincerely

JOHN COBB, MP
Federal Member for Parkes

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**Mrs Donna Files
Menindee Health Advisory Council
Po Box 25
Menindee NSW 2879**

**Mr J Cobb
Member for Parkes
Suite 3
153 Brisbane St
Dubbo NSW 2830**

24 April 2003

Dear Mr Cobb

The Menindee Health Advisory Council sought your assistance on October 9 2002, regarding the inclusion of Aged and Respite accommodation in the proposed new health facility for Menindee. Members are grateful your time and letter of support (November 13 2002) given towards Menindee's plight.

Unfortunately, the Far West Area Health Service did not pursue the matter on our behalf, on the understanding that the necessary funding must be gained from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing. A case was also presented by FWAHS that Menindee's needs did not fulfil the ratio criteria for funding. We were also told that Menindee was not in the fortunate position of already having any such service in place like other towns. Those such towns, similar or less in population, have not lost any allocation and in some situations have new and bigger facilities. An example of this is Menindee is a further distance from Broken Hill than towns like Collarenebri is from Walgett, yet Collarenebri's new hospital is offering increased accommodation for the aged.

The Menindee Health Advisory Council would strongly argue that there is no formula for equity. Our community is severely, socially and geographically disadvantaged, living in the hope that accommodation places will be sourced in Broken Hill when the need arises. Urgent respite care for disabled people can only be found in Broken Hill, 110 km away. Currently difficulties with Aged Care placements in Broken Hill only compound the problem.



Office of the
Minister for Ageing

10 June 2003

Mr John Cobb MP
Federal Member for Parkes
PO Box 443
BROKEN HILL NSW 2880

Dear Mr Cobb

Thank you for your personal representations to Senator the Hon. Kay Patterson, Minister for Health and Ageing, on behalf of Menindee Health Advisory Council regarding aged and respite care facilities in Menindee.

Your correspondence has been referred to the Hon. Kevin Andrews, Minister for Ageing, who has portfolio responsibility for this matter.

The Minister has referred your letter, and issue raised within, to the Department for investigation. The matter is now being examined for report to the Minister and response to you.

Yours sincerely


Jodie Doodt
Office Manager

**JOHN COBB MP****FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PARKES**

National Party of Australia

**PLEASE REPLY TO BROKEN HILL OFFICE**

8 August 2003

Mr. R. Doyle
Facilitator
Menindee Health Advisory Council
P.O. Box 25
MENINDEE. 2879

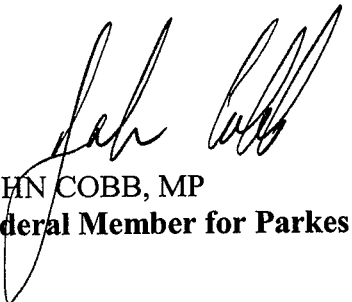
Dear Mr. Doyle

Attached is a copy of the reply I have received from the Hon. Trish Worth, MP,
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing in regards to a Multi Purpose
Service for Menindee.

I am not satisfied with this response and am perusing it further.

I will contact you again when I have further information.

Yours sincerely



JOHN COBB, MP
Federal Member for Parkes

Country Answers for Country People

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THE HON TRISH WORTH MP

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing
Member for Adelaide

Mr John Cobb MP
Member for Parkes
Suite 2
Brookfield House
275 Argent Street
BROKEN HILL NSW 2880

Dear Mr Cobb, John,

Thank you for your representations of 23 May 2003 to the Minister for Health and Ageing, Senator the Hon Kay Patterson, on behalf of the Menindee Health Advisory Council, concerning the inclusion of aged and respite accommodation in the proposed new health facility to be built in Menindee, and your suggestion that a Multipurpose Service (MPS) be established in Menindee. As Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister, I am responding on her behalf.

I will address your suggestion of an MPS first. The MPS Program is a joint Commonwealth and State Government initiative where the Commonwealth provides funding for flexible aged care places, and the State provides funds for a range of health services. Additionally, an MPS site may also attract State funding for capital works. The MPS model best suits communities that have insufficient catchment populations to sustain separate health and aged care services and that, because of their isolation, are unable to access the appropriate range or mix of services. However, it is not the answer for all small rural communities.

As joint funders, the Commonwealth and the State Governments need to agree that an MPS is the most suitable service model for the community and that services have the capacity to achieve financial viability under MPS funding arrangements. The Commonwealth has no evidence that the State supports an MPS in Menindee.

In addition, the Commonwealth's comprehensive planning framework, which aims to achieve an equitable distribution of places to regions by providing 100 residential aged care places and Community Aged Care Packages (CACPs) for every 1,000 people aged 70 years and over, indicates that the existing aged care service provision in the Orana Far West aged care planning region (of which Menindee is a part) demonstrates its ability to meet community needs. I understand there are currently CACPs provided in the Central Darling Statistical Local Area in which Menindee is located, provided by Home Care Service of New South Wales, and Wesley Gardens Georgian Community Care, and residential aged care services provided from Broken Hill.



John COBB MP



Parliament of Australia House of Representatives

NATIONAL PARTY FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PARKES

Delivering Real Results!

REPLY TO BROKEN HILL OFFICE

24 October 2003

Mr. R. Doyle
Facilitator
Menindee Health Advisory Council
P.O. Box 25
MENINDEE. 2879

Dear Mr. Doyle

Enclosed is a further letter I have received from the Hon. Trish Worth, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, in regards to a Multi Purpose Service for Menindee. And I draw your attention to the second last paragraph.

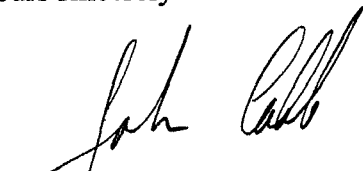
Since receiving this response I have written to the Hon. Morris Iemma, State Minister for Health and have forwarded copies of the Hon. Trish Worth's correspondence and a copy of my letter to Ms. Mary Lafferty, Acting Manager of Rural Health Programs, Department of Health and Ageing, Sydney, to the Minister.

I am unyielding in my belief that the citizens of Menindee are entitled to a MPS. I have pointed out to the Minister that the figures quoted may be correct about the allocation of places for the Western Region but Menindee is an isolated town in the remote far west of NSW, 100 kms from the nearest hospital in Broken Hill and 150 kms from the hospital in Wilcannia. I have pointed out that other factors such as isolation, road access that is closed by rain, the fact that there is no all-weather airstrip, to suggest a few, should also be taken into account.

I have pointed out to the Hon. Morris Iemma that there are many towns in NSW less isolated, about one third the size and closer to far bigger towns than Menindee is, that have a MPS

I will forward a copy of the State Minister for Health's reply to you when it arrives.

Yours sincerely



JOHN COBB, MP
Federal Member for Parkes

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THE HON TRISH WORTH MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing
Member for Adelaide

Mr John Cobb MP
Member for Parkes
Suite 2
Brookfield House
275 Argent Street
BROKEN HILL NSW 2880

Dear Mr Cobb, *John,*

Thank you for your representations of 8 August 2003 to the Minister for Health and Ageing, Senator the Hon Kay Patterson, concerning a Multipurpose Service (MPS) for Menindee. As Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister, I am responding on her behalf.

As outlined in my correspondence of 18 July 2003, the MPS Program is a joint Australian/State Government initiative, where the Australian Government provides funding for flexible aged care places and the State provides funding for a range of health services in addition to any capital development required for the MPS.

As joint funders, the Australian and the State Governments need to agree that an MPS is the most suitable service model for the community and that services have the capacity to achieve financial viability under the MPS funding arrangements.

To date, the Australian Government has no evidence that the New South Wales State Government would support an MPS for Menindee. Unfortunately, without this support for, among other things, the necessary staffing and capital development, the Australian Government is not in a position to pursue an MPS for Menindee.

Thank you again for your interest in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Trish Worth

Trish Worth

03 OCT 2003

18.2.04

Menindee Health Service has over 5200 active patient medical records

Community visits register 55 people

People waiting for placement 2

Menindee people currently in aged care in other towns 4

People who could use respite care (aged and disabled) 7

Meals On Wheels current 10 (is often up to 19)

Sunset Strip Stats as at 23.2.04

- 136 Houses
 - 70 people aged over 60
 - 50 people between age 55-60
 - 85 Adults living permanently
- 21 people over age 60 living permanently
- 15 people aged 55-60 living permanently
- Number of children's stats not yet recorded