



**Government
of South Australia**

**Mallee Health Service
Health Advisory Council Inc.**

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File No.	
Order	Yes No
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September 18th 2014

Hon Jack Snelling M.P.
Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse
Minister for Health Industries, Minister for the Arts
Leader of Government Business in the House of Assembly

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Mallee Health Service Health Advisory Council (HAC) in response to the letter from The Premier Jay Weatherill with his intention to close boards and committees.

After extensive consultation with the HAC, community and other health services in The Riverland, Mallee/Coorong Region and, also listening to your advice at the Country Health SA conference, we offer the following outcomes to those discussions.

Mallee Health Service HAC is an amalgamation of the Pinnaroo, Lameroo and Karoonda Health Services. This amalgamation took place in 2002 and has been a successful and growing service who have met all the legal and government requirements of 10 Year Plans, Task Groups and Implementation Plans. We will shortly begin to measure the outcomes so far against the 10 year plans. We are not willing to consider any further amalgamation of services as our HAC members already come from a wide area, namely the Victorian Border to Karoonda and in between. We cover two Local Government District Councils and have HAC representation from them.

Some staff work across all sites and indeed Pinnaroo and Lameroo have one EO/DON and Karoonda share an EO/DON with Mannum. In small communities such as ours the Doctor and Health Service are the hub of the community. Community consultation is not difficult as HAC members also belong to Service Clubs and Sporting Clubs and can use those contacts to gain information about needs and concerns readily.

The Mallee Health Service HAC meet bi-monthly and have our Director attend every other meeting. In between he uses videoconferencing facilities. The Director provides a Regional report which gives us information across our area and saves him time. We use videoconferencing often to communicate with other HACs in our Region and for Presiding Members meetings across our Cluster and our Region. These support networks work very well but in the end we are individual services with different community needs and expectations.

The S.A Health Care Act of 2008 and our Constitution states that Health Advisory Councils, apart from community consultation, should encourage fundraising.

Since the impediment for spending locally donated funds has been lifted, our communities have commenced some big fundraising activities especially around increased comforts for the Aged Care residents. This has created a renewed interest in our service and amenities.

The Medical Clinics in the 3 Mallee towns are owned by Country Health SA. These were formally owned by the Health Services and purchased with community funding consequently the communities are very active in supporting their G.Ps and ensuring the infrastructure is in place to attract and retain them. We operate as one Practice, Mallee Medical Practice.

The Mallee Health Service Health Advisory Council believe that we have made changes when necessary and will pursue further videoconferencing, emailing and texting opportunities to streamline our business into the future. We have positively accepted having senior staff amalgamate their roles across sites. As suggested by you, Minister, at the conference we have looked at the way we do our business and believe that our willingness to embrace change has stood us in good stead so far and we will continue to work with Country Health SA Governing Council and the staff to be open to the changes required in modern governance systems.

We respectfully ask that the Mallee Health Service Health Advisory Council be allowed to continue it's business as stated in the SA Health Care Act of 2008 and within the rules of our Constitution.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Kathleen J Gregurke'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'K' and 'G'.

Kathleen Gregurke
Presiding Member
Mallee Health Service Health Advisory Council