

## **Staff feedback to the proposed relocation of the DHS GMU to Bolger Street, Campbelltown.**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional staff feedback to the proposed DHS GMU relocation.

The previous meeting at Cabramatta CHC did not provide enough time for staff to raise or discuss concerns.

Key points:

1. The next relocation of the DHS GM Unit should be to the new DHS facility in an LHD site, supported by appropriate staff input to co-location, design and operation.
2. The proposed relocation of the DHS GMU Unit to Bolger Street, Campbelltown is unnecessary and, in balance, will have a significantly adverse impact on the well-being and retention of staff and the productivity of the Unit.
3. Staff should be consulted to a finalised proposal to relocate the DHS GMU to Bolger Street, Campbelltown inclusive of a rationale for the relocation, a full assessment of the impact on the Unit, and responses to the access, design and safety concerns identified by staff.

### *1. The proposed additional relocation of the DHS GMU is unnecessary*

DHS GMU is scheduled to relocate to a purpose-built DHS facility in an LHD site. As a funded redevelopment it is expected that this will take place in the next three years.

The proposed additional relocation from an established and appropriate site to a second site in another part of SWSLHD is unnecessary and will have a significantly adverse impact on the well-being and retention of staff and the productivity of the Unit.

It is disappointing that the significant contribution that staff have made to support the service through COVID and to renew the reputation of the service and staff morale over the last two years could be undone by this proposal.

### *2. The proposed relocation to Bolger Street, Campbelltown will have an adverse impact on the service*

Staff have expressed alarm that the relocation of the DHS GMU to Bolger Street, Campbelltown, on balance, will not have a positive impact on the Unit or help us maintain our high standards.

Any minimal efficiency gains and greater opportunity for partnership that may arise are far outweighed by the adverse impact on the well-being and retention of staff and the productivity of the Unit from the relocation. Campbelltown, as a less central location within SWSLHD, will increase the travel time for GMU & DHS staff.

The expected loss of experienced DHS GMU Unit staff due to the relocation, especially in a labour market where we struggle to attract suitable applicants, will cause further loss of morale and concern at increased workload.

### *3. Staff have not been consulted to the proposed relocation to Bolger Street, Campbelltown*

There is disappointment that staff have not been consulted to a finalised relocation proposal. Rather we have been advised that, despite the proposal being incomplete, that the relocation will proceed.

This has left staff without adequate information to assess the proposal or their future work with DHS or in SWSLHD. Long-term DHS staff members have expressed surprise and distress at being treated this way. New DHS staff members said they would not be treated this way in their previous SWSLHD Units.

The relocation from one LGA in SWSLHD to another will, for some staff, add to their existing travel time and transport costs. The relocation will, for staff for whom the extended commute becomes unviable, lead to an unnecessary and non-merit based loss of staff.

#### *4. The proposal does not address the access, design or safety concerns identified by staff*

The proposal is incomplete, provides limited rationale or evidence to support the relocation, no evidence of consultation and does not address key issues raised by staff. The report should identify other strategies available to support well-being including implementation of the WFH policy and other flexible work practices. The proposal should be developed and documented to the District's standard for a similar service redevelopment proposal.

#### *5. Parking affects safety and access*

The lack of identified available parking at/or adjacent to Bolger Street is a significant limitation of the proposal and raises access and safety issues for all staff.

Parking availability in the Macarthur Square area is limited. A significant proportion of free and accessible parking locations are utilised by commuters. It is the experience of staff, including those that live in the area, that on working days that any adjacent free parking spaces are taken by 7.00am.

Staff are concerned about the increased risk to their safety when walking longer distances through often inactive public spaces to unrestricted parking spaces. These concerns are heightened when carrying office equipment. The recent decision to restrict the starting times for the DHS GMU to from 7.30am, further reduces the options available to staff to arrive early to gain more accessible parking.

Staff with existing health conditions &/or mobility issues that limit their walking distances from car to workplace, will be disadvantaged by this proposal.

#### *6. The DHS GMU will benefit from remaining at Cabramatta CHC*

Cabramatta DHS is a great place to work. DHS GMU staff have contributed to rebuilding DHS reputation and workforce over the last two years and managed the service through the COVID pandemic. No longer is 'Cabramatta' a euphemism for an aloof or disengaged GMU, rather it is seen as an attractive place to work. The recent recruitment to the long-standing Director Allied Health vacancy is a positive sign of this change.

Staff like working at Cabramatta CHC. All DHS GMU staff employed before 2023 chose to work from Cabramatta CHC. The availability of adjacent parking, direct access to the facility and the less congested suburban surrounds are attractive features.

The design of Cabramatta CHC better supports the needs of a the primarily office based GMU workforce. Work-stations and offices provide a personalised, quiet and calm work environment that supports staff well-being, quality and productivity, especially while focussing on complex work. There is ample adjacent free parking spaces.

As a rent-free building Cabramatta CHC delivers a cost benefit to the District.

The Bolger Street design is better suited to an operational unit that is working mainly off-site.