

Media Release

27 February 2025



Healthscope statement on Northern Beaches Hospital

From Greg Horan, CEO Healthscope and Tino La Spina, incoming CEO.

We'd like to start by expressing our deepest sympathy to the Massa family for the loss of their son Joe. We also express this on behalf of the doctors, nurses, clinicians and staff from the Northern Beaches Hospital (NBH).

There were unacceptable failings in the treatment of Joe, and we are sorry that Joe did not receive the care he deserved at our hospital.

We agree with Joe's parents, Elouise and Danny Massa, that every effort must be made to prevent such a tragedy occurring again and restore the confidence of the community in the hospital.

Healthscope has accepted all findings and recommendations of the Serious Adverse Event Review and have already enacted several changes to our systems.

These include:

- Prioritising the Paediatric Emergency Department (ED) in staff specialist rounds. Paediatric ED are now put first on ward rounds
- Morning handover meetings in the ED are now taking place in the Paediatric ED
- All triage of paediatric ED patients are now double triaged including consultation with the Nursing Unit Manager, the most senior nurse. New visual aids for triage and training are being provided
- Working with our technology partners to rectify issues identified with systems failures
- Strengthening access to the REACH protocol via QR code which all parents will be provided with at triage. This proactive step will provide a clear explanation of the ability to ask for help. Healthscope also wholeheartedly supports changing REACH to become 'Joe's Rule'.

As a public hospital, NBH will share all learnings with the Local Health District and the NSW Government to enable wider enactment of these initiatives across other NSW public hospitals.

Healthscope will also establish an independent review. This will invite views from patients, including the Massa family, to regain the trust of the local community.

Northern Beaches Hospital is staffed by passionate and dedicated clinicians who care deeply about patients. The staff have been deeply affected by Joe's death.

Our hospital staff have endured challenging interactions in the past week, both in person and on social media. Abuse of our dedicated healthcare workers is not acceptable, and we ask

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that they are treated respectfully.

Healthscope has a team dedicated to patient feedback, which follows up on all issues raised by patients or their families. We are open to speaking directly with anyone who wants to raise an issue or concern.

We care for over 120,000 patients at Northern Beaches Hospital each year, with the vast majority receiving outstanding care. The hospital is performing strongly on several key clinical indicators, but we accept there are things that must be improved. Our goal is a learning culture, of continuous improvement, with patient care at its centre.

Again, on behalf of everyone at Northern Beaches Hospital and Healthscope, we apologise to his family and offer our deepest condolences for the death of their son, Joe.

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For more information contact media@healthscope.com.au

Background:

Healthscope is Australia's only national private healthcare provider, operating 38 hospitals across the country, and employing over 18,000 people. Healthscope offers world-class patient care, including medical and surgical services, mental health treatment and rehabilitation services.