



Hon. Kim Hames MLA
Minister for Health
28th Floor Governor Stirling Tower
197 St Georges Terrace
Perth WA 6000

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ADELE CARLES MLA

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MEMBER FOR FREMANTLE

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Dear Minister ^{Kim}Hames,

HOSPITAL GENERAL PRACTICE, FREMANTLE

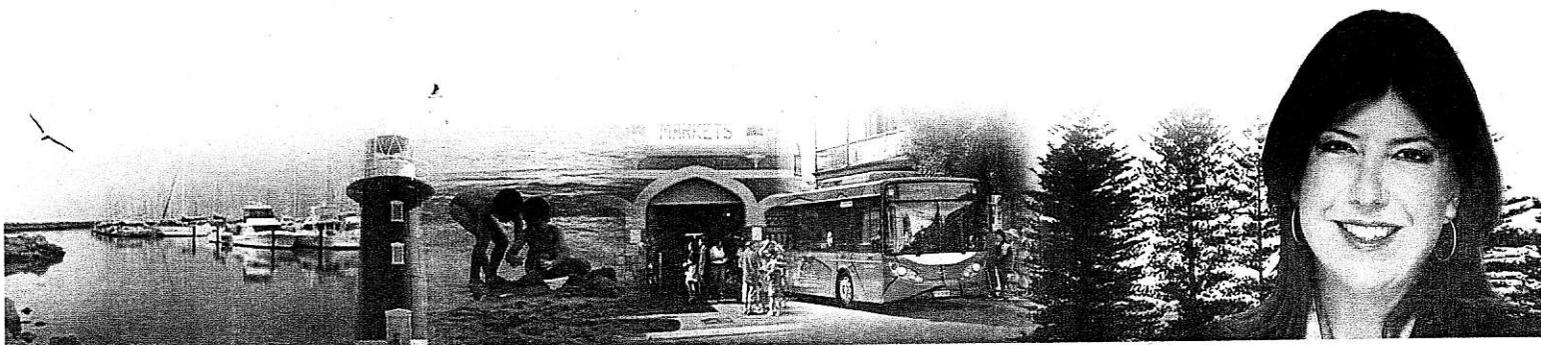
I am writing to seek your assistance in ensuring the ongoing viability of the Hospital General Practice (HGP) in Fremantle.

HGP has operated for more than 20 years as a private practice in Fremantle, servicing more than 25,000 patients from across Perth on a bulk-billed basis. Many of the patients have mental health issues and some are homeless.

It retains a good working relationship with the Fremantle Hospital Emergency Department; indeed, I am advised that the ED are often able to divert Category 5 patients to the Practice.

HGP is however struggling and now finds itself in a financially precarious position. In the first instance, I respectfully request an immediate one-off injection of funds. \$100,000 would enable the practice to pay off outstanding amounts and allow ongoing security.

Further to that, I believe the Hospital General Practice needs to be recognised as an area of 'unmet need' on the basis of the nature of its patients and the way it bills. This would allow the practice to employ overseas doctors. There are currently three GPs who operate out of the practice, but in order to continue working with the significant numbers of patients with mental health issues, there is a need for at least two more full-time GPs, particularly specialising in mental health.



As part of the practice's long term viability, I also seek your support to secure a clear agreement between the Hospital General Practice and Fremantle Hospital under the Health Insurance Act 1973. This would allow HGP to continue to bill Medicare whilst working from hospital premises.

This practice provides an invaluable service to the Fremantle community and it takes pressure off the Fremantle ED. Given that this practice deals with mental health patients, I have copied this correspondence to the Hon Helen Morton, Minister for Mental Health. I respectfully request your intervention to secure the future of this practice.

Yours sincerely,



Adele Carles MLA
Member for Fremantle

Cc Hon Helen Morton, Minister for Mental Health