

# Shoalhaven City & Shoalhaven Lions Linear Accelerator & Cancer Treatment Appeal

---

## **Subject:**

The provision of Government Financial and Other Support for the establishment of Cancer Care facilities in Nowra, NSW – most particularly to provide linear accelerator treatment capability.

## **Background:**

In 2004 a group of concerned individuals, distressed through the need to travel with relatives and friends long distances for cancer treatment, particularly, radiotherapy, decided to launch an initiative aimed at the provision of the requisite facilities at Nowra, New South Wales.

Initially this group met with Federal and State politicians and cancer care specialists in both the medical and associated bureaucratic fields to determine the likelihood of success for such a project. Following these discussions the Shoalhaven City & Shoalhaven Lions Linear Accelerator & Cancer Treatment Fundraising Committee Inc. was formed and a target for fundraising of \$1 million was set. The Committee was granted tax exempt status for its fundraising activities.

The Committee operates with significant support from Shoalhaven City Council which provides financial and other support as appropriate. More latterly the Committee has been strengthened through the inclusion of many of the Lions Clubs in Shoalhaven.

## **Need for Cancer Care Facilities and their fit to Nowra.**

The Committee believes that there is an overwhelming case for the development of wide-ranging Cancer Care facilities in Nowra. The Shoalhaven's population has been rapidly increasing with around 100, 000 people now residing in the area. It is expected that the population will reach 135,000 by 2020. This population contains a far higher proportion of elderly residents than many other Local Government areas. Currently our residents travel to Wollongong, Sydney or Canberra for linear accelerator cancer treatment. It has been demonstrated to the Committee that the further away from home people need to travel the lower the take-up rate for this form of treatment. In short, our residents are being denied basic medical treatment through the tyranny of distance.

It is believed that the area of interest for these facilities will include Eden to Gerringong as well as the Southern Highlands. Therefore, the total population most likely to benefit from the project will be around 190,000 people.

The Nowra area has a well-equipped and staffed Public Hospital which also offers a modest service for chemotherapy. This hospital has recently undergone a \$30 million expansion and modernisation program. Recently, the nearby Shoalhaven Campus of Wollongong University commenced courses in both Medicine and Nursing and the local hospital forms an integral part in the training and development of these students.

#### **Activities to Date:**

The local community has got behind the fundraising appeal and \$800,000 has been raised. These funds have come from a wide range of activities such as Postie Bike rides, garden clubs, raffles, bingo, donations and special fundraising functions. Further activities are planned and it is expected that the target will be met within twelve months.

#### **The Way Ahead**

The local population, through its financial support, has demonstrated its profound interest in securing these cancer care facilities.

#### **Commitment from Government**

Our Committee is seeking a commitment from the Government to provide financial and other support for the provision of cancer care services at Nowra, in particular, the inclusion of linear accelerator services.

Paul Green,  
Mayor/Chairman,  
*Shoalhaven City & Shoalhaven Lions Linear Accelerator & Cancer Treatment  
Fundraising Committee*

---