

Check-in to hotel 'hospital'

How bed shortage has forced public patients to recover in CBD luxury

Brad Crouch

Elderly patients stuck in hospital while waiting for a federally funded aged-care place are taking up the equivalent of an entire Modbury Hospital, says Health Minister Chris Picton – but some may soon end up in a luxury hotel.

The latest audit shows 253 patients languishing in metropolitan hospitals ready for discharge but waiting for an aged-care placement – a 158 per cent increase in 15 months.

The state government,



Chris Picton

which promised to “fix” ambulance ramping but another 3479 hours were lost in January, has also seized on separate new data to show federal funding for aged care is part of the reason public hospital emergency departments remain clogged, in turn leading to delays transferring ambulance patients.

The latest Productivity

Commission report on health services, for 2022-23, shows South Australia has the highest rate in the country of hospital patient days by people waiting for an aged-care bed – 24.4 days in 2022-23 compared to the national average of 13.2 days.

More generally, the report shows elderly South Australians are waiting an average 253 days to be placed in aged care after receiving an ACAT assessment – the longest in the nation and almost double the national average of 136 days.

It comes as the state government relocates 24 public hospital patients who no longer need acute care – including aged-care patients – to the Pullman Adelaide Hotel to allow them to rest and recover in comfort and at no cost so hospital beds can be freed up.

The new Transition Care Service will be used by patients including those who are medically stable but still require clinical care and other supports while they wait for community or aged-care accommodation, rehabilitation

or at-home support to become available.

Mr Picton said the government was opening 55 extra beds at Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre as part of a 70-bed hospital service for older people waiting for aged care, but called on the federal government to do more to clear hospitals by making aged-care places available.

“Right now, there are a staggering 253 older South Australians medically ready to leave hospital but who are stuck there because they’re waiting

for an aged-care bed,” he said.

“That’s the equivalent of more than the entire Modbury Hospital taken out of the system. The latest Productivity Commission national report card shows SA has the longest waits in the country for a federal aged-care bed.”

The report shows the percentage of people who have delayed or did not see a GP due to cost jumped in SA from 2.4 per cent in 2020-21 to 7.3 per cent in 2023-24. Opposition leader Vincent Tarzia said ramping remains “truly diabolical.”

Get in the swim to aid prostate fight



Norm Collins, Greg Humphries, Paul Rafanelli, Isabella Domagalski and Kevin Richardson prepare for the Pink and Blue Swim, Walk or Run at West Beach Surf Lifesaving Club. Picture: Brenton Edwards

Evangelina Polymeneas

If Paul Rafanelli was not undergoing regular blood tests and check ups he never would have known he had prostate cancer.

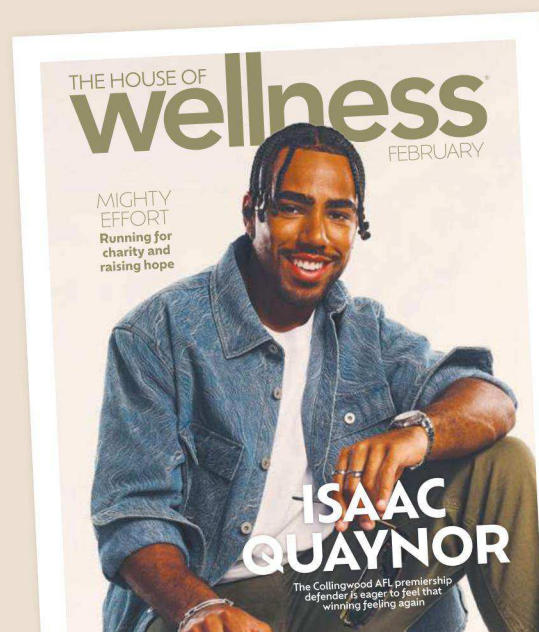
“I didn’t get any symptoms beforehand... it may have happened but I wasn’t aware of it,” the 58-year-old said.

The increasing prostate-specific antigen (‘PSA’) in his blood alerted his GP who scheduled Mr Rafanelli for a specialist appointment.

The West Beach grandfather, who is a patrol member of the West Beach Surf Lifesaving Club, underwent a prostatectomy which successfully removed the cancer.

Since the cancer has not returned, which he attributes early intervention.

Mr Rafanelli, who founded the Pink and Blue Swim, said the event will be held on Sunday to raise vital funds for the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (‘PCFA’) and the St Andrew’s Hospital Foundation.



THE HOUSE OF wellness

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