

Dear Ms. Concannon,

I support the fourth option before the committee - the building of a new acute public hospital on Canberra's north side - as a result of personal experience.

Mid last year I was admitted to Calvary with a cardiac problem the treatment for which is to stop and restart the heart. The doctor explained the procedure to me and although he never used the phrase 'could be fatal' I deduced that was his meaning. I assured him that I had long been reconciled to the eventual inevitability of death and authorised and requested him to conduct the procedure. He did so and it was successful but as I was talking with him I was seeing over his shoulder a representation of a dead body hanging from a piece of wood. It was an unfortunate conjunction.

I subsequently suggested that the hospital management instead of displaying a symbol which is sombre to the point of repellant could display instead the alternative christian symbol of the nativity star which would be cheerful. I received a courteous reply but have not heard of my suggestion being accepted.

I would prefer to be treated in a hospital free of such symbols so support the option of new premises directly under ACT government management. The extant premises could still be retained and used for ancillary medical purposes.

As a footnote I suggest the committee endeavour to ascertain what proportion of the ACT population is active catholic and therefore appreciates such symbols, and what proportion is not and therefore would presumably prefer not.