

**Michael Brown for  
South Burnett Regional Council  
Mayor**



Attn: News Editor

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## **Medical Community Frustrated At Losing Specialists for Patients**

### ***Private Hospital Alternative Solutions Being Ignored***

South Burnett Regional Council Mayoral Candidate Mike Brown of Rural Medical Centres and Glendon St Medical Centre and Dr. Isabelle Jonsson-Lear of Haly Health & Skin Medical Centre are both calling for Mayor Wayne Kratzmann to consider alternative health solutions to retain visiting specialists to the community as the likelihood of finding an operator to run the Private Hospital diminishes.

Mr Brown said the Queensland Regional Profile Statistics from the State Government, which contained the latest Census data, showed that the South Burnett Region had 61.7% of the population in the most disadvantaged quintile and 17.8% in the second most disadvantaged quintile, meaning that approximately 79.5% of the South Burnett Region could not afford private health insurance to justify the operation of a Private Hospital in Kingaroy.

“In discussions I have had with private hospital operators nearby they advised me that they would not be interested in running the private hospital because the catchment area of Kingaroy is too small and the socio-economics of the town and the region are too low – which the statistics support,” Mr Brown said.

He said that the community’s rallying behind the cause with 10,000 signatures to keep the hospital open showed that the community valued having access to specialist health services, but those services needed to be delivered in a new model that worked for the needs of the people of the region.

“I am calling on the Mayor to talk to me about the alternative proposal I offered to the South Burnett Regional Council as a not-for-profit entity back in May 2015 and again in June 2015 to keep visiting specialists and introduce more allied health services that are desperately needed in the region in that building.

“I am frustrated that the community is being told the Hospital is operational when the only current activity in the building is a decreasing number of visiting specialists who are being managed by a Council-paid receptionist. I want to help the community, I have a solution that will not cost rate-payers and I am being ignored,” Mr Brown said.

Dr Jonsson-Lear is frustrated at losing access to specialists for her patients and said that the only information she knew about the progress of saving the private hospital was from the media.

“In the same way nobody ever discussed those problems (of the Private Hospital) with any of the doctors so we could discuss ways for it to be solved, we are again being kept out of discussions about alternative solutions such as the one Michael has proposed,” she said.

“I want clear information about what can happen and I want to work toward some infrastructure where everybody will benefit. At the moment we are all flying in the dark – and we need the best solution for the community if a private hospital is not viable, as it doesn’t seem to be.

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## Medical Community Frustrated At Losing Specialists for Patients Continued

“To at least have the specialists being able to consult from there to help our patients is a priority. We can set up a magic tele-health facility and other services to make portions of what the private hospital did previously viable as Michael has proposed, but at the moment we are living with our heads in the sand and we are not looking at what our options are that we can sort this out with,” she said.

Mr Brown said he had allied health services ready to work with him in the community and more discussions with General Practitioners would be held to explain his proposal as a viable solution.

*Resource reference: Qld Govt Statistics – Qld Regional Profiles <http://statistics.qgso.qld.gov.au/qld-regional-profiles>*

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