



**PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

27 January 2026

Mr Gerard Hayes  
Secretary  
Health Services Union  
Level 2, 109 Pitt Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Sent via email: [info@hsu.asn.au](mailto:info@hsu.asn.au); [secretary@hsu.asn.au](mailto:secretary@hsu.asn.au)

Dear Mr Hayes,

**RE: Safehaven Service - Newcastle**

The Safehaven service is currently located in a stand-alone building (house) on Stewart Avenue Newcastle. The service operates Friday to Sunday 4pm to 9pm and offers an alternative to presenting to an Emergency Department. It is a non-clinical space for consumers to seek advice from those with a lived experience of suicide. The service is peer worker led. Staff are rostered from 1:30pm to 10pm and consist of one (1) Clinician and two (2) Peer workers over these days.

The location of the service is near entertainment venues (Pubs and Clubs) in Newcastle that are frequented by the public over the weekend. There has been a number of incidents involving intoxicated members of the public accessing the service. These presentations are not aligned with the purpose of the Safehaven service and in turn presents a potential safety risk to those working in and utilising same for legitimate mental health reasons.

Furthermore, the physical distance between the Safehaven location and that of the closest Emergency Department (Calvary Mater/Mental Health) is considerable, in the event of an escalation at Safehaven or a referral to Safehaven from the Mater Mental Health Centres, Psychiatric Emergency Care Centre (PECC).

The current distance and isolation of Safehaven from a Hospital presents a number of challenges and issues that places at risk safe, efficient, holistic triage and care. This is heightened for young persons (under 18 years) who present in the absence of a guardian.

In consideration of the identified issues, it is proposed that the Safehaven service is relocated to the Calvary Mater Mental Health Service (Waratah) and become integrated with the PECC. The physical location of Safehaven would be within the McAuley Building situated on the Calvary Mater Hospital Campus.

The benefits and rationale for this proposed relocation are as follows;

Improved patient flow/access between Safehaven, Calvary Mater Emergency Department and PECC (all within close proximity)

Hunter New England Local Health District (HNELHD) wishes to commence consultation on the proposed change which is foreshadowed to commence in the second quarter of 2026.



We are committed to working with staff during the service relocation process to ensure they have the support and relevant information.

Please feel free to make contact should you have any questions or wish to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely,

**Cath Wood**  
*Director of Allied Health*  
Mental Health Service  
HNE Local Health District

Cc Mark Andrei, Snr HR Business Partner Mental Health Services