



Hamish Walker

Member of Parliament for Clutha-Southland

27 May 2019

Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern
Prime Minister
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON 6160

Dear Prime Minister

Yesterday a baby was born on the side of the road because the necessary equipment was not present at the maternal and child hub in Lumsden. The midwife made the decision to travel 60 minutes to Kew Hospital in Invercargill.

It is disappointing to see rural people discriminated against by this Government. Re-instating full services will help contribute towards equality for rural people.

I have written to your Minister of Health, Dr. David Clark, on three separate occasions, most recently 9 May 2019 advising him that the maternal and child hubs in Lumsden and Te Anau were not up and running as promised. The Southern District Health Board has failed to deliver the equipment required for the scaled-down maternal and child hubs, including emergency supplies such as oxygen. The community's pleas to keep Lumsden Maternity Hospital open as a primary birthing unit have continuously been ignored by your Government over the past 12 months.

The Minister has said that the issue is an operational matter. However the Minister has the authority to intervene when an operational matter is brought to his attention. Furthermore, your Ministry of Health did not answer my question around the service coverage schedule.

How many more births on the side of the road need to occur before services are re-instated? I call on you to do the right thing and fully re-instate services to the Lumsden Maternity Hospital before loss of life occurs. It would cost less than \$200,000 per year to reinstate.

Yours sincerely

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