

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

NO PRIVATISATION OF MIDLAND HEALTH CAMPUS BILL 2011 (E 255)

(Introduced by Mr Roger Cook, MLA)

The proposed Midland Health Campus stands to become a vital part of Western Australia's health infrastructure. It will replace the public Swan District Hospital, providing 307 beds and a large number of new hospital services to residents in the eastern suburbs of Perth. However, the State Government of Western Australia currently intends for a private corporation to design, build and operate the new facility. This privatised model of service delivery is a departure from the way Swan District Hospital is currently operated and threatens the high standard of healthcare which eastern metropolitan residents are entitled to.

Experiences in Western Australia and other jurisdictions demonstrate that private service providers fail to consistently deliver high standards of quality, safety and equity of access. These providers are unable to be held accountable for such failures. A market-driven approach to healthcare prioritises cost cutting and readjusts services based on price signals rather than the needs of the community.

Additionally, the profit motive of privately provided services puts pressure on labour costs and results in unfavourable wages and conditions for staff. The chronic under-investment in staff leads to high turnover rates, inadequate training and insufficient staff levels. This is not only unfair on hard working hospital workers, but also has flow-on effects in the form of reduced responsiveness to emergencies and a loss of service delivery quality.

This purpose of this bill is to protect the quality of hospital services by mandating that the proposed Midland Health Campus be conducted or managed by the State as a public hospital.

- Clause 1** Short title
- Clause 2** Commencement clause – the Act comes into operation the day after it receives Royal Assent.
- Clause 3** The object of the Act is to ensure that hospital services at the Midland Health Campus are provided by the State and not by the private sector.

Clause 4 This defines the terms used in the Act, including:

Midland Health Campus is defined as the proposed hospital of that name to be built in the Midland Redevelopment Area.

Clause 5 The Midland Health Campus must be conducted or managed by the State as a public hospital.

Clause 6 Agreements contravening section 5 are in violation of this Act and will be void.