



# Media Release

## Senator Mathias Cormann

### *Acting Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing*

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#### **DRAFT REPORT A WARNING FOR RUDD AND ROXON**

Today's draft Productivity Commission report on the *Performance of Public and Private Hospitals* should cause the Rudd Government to re-think its attacks on private health.

Acting Shadow Health Minister Senator Mathias Cormann said that while the Commission had heavily qualified its findings in the draft report, its indications were that the Federal Government should be extremely careful with policy decisions that would push people away from private health and into the public health system.

"What this draft report does show is that private hospitals play a crucial role in the nation's health system and in significant areas provide more cost efficient healthcare," Senator Cormann said.

"It also shows that of the billions of dollars that go into public hospitals in Australia, not enough is known about how or where that money is spent."

Senator Cormann said the Coalition would await the Productivity Commission's final report which would include more detailed analysis of the public and private sectors.

"The commission found comparing private and public hospital performance was extremely challenging because of a lack of comparable information and noted that it encountered difficulties in accessing information from hospitals – delays that could not be justified on privacy or confidentiality grounds."

"The States should be co-operating with the commission not hampering it," Senator Cormann said.

"Mr Rudd promised to fix hospitals in Australia, but so far he's made things worse through inaction in the public system and a concerted attack on the private health system which will put even more pressure on to public hospitals," Senator Cormann said.

He said Australians needed a government focused on ensuring timely and affordable access to quality health care.

The best way to achieve that is through a well balanced mixed health system with a strong and well funded public system and a strong and well supported private system.

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