One of the most urgent needs: NSW health system to undergo major treatment

The Health Services Union has called for a royal commission into the state’s health system after a report revealed a “chronic misallocation of resources and warped priorities” in NSW hospitals.

Last year, 184 people died in NSW hospitals after waiting more than 12 hours for treatment, with 3000 more cases of patients waiting more than 12 hours.

WSU president Gerard Hayes said the rise in wait times and deaths was anything but a coincidence.

“Why are we still having such a high number of people die on hospital beds? It’s because of a dysfunctional system,” Hayes said.

“NSW has been a laboratory for how not to run a health system over 40 years without substantial action, making an overwhelming case for a royal commission.”

Hayes said there had been more than 20 major reports into sections of the health system over the past decade, but nothing had been done.

“Entrenched problems around funding could be effectively exposed,” Hayes said.

NSW Premier Chris Minns said he chose to hold his first announcement after his swearing-in was to outline the taskforce.

Minns and Health Minister Ryan Park, who were both sworn into a skeleton cabinet on Tuesday ahead of the full ministry, made health the focus of their first formal day on the job.

The HSU report warned that patient complaints had increased 40 per cent since 2011-12. Ten per cent of NSW hospitals had no complaints in 2011-12, but by 2019-20 only 5.7 per cent of hospitals had no complaints.

The report also revealed a “chronic misallocation of resources and warped priorities” in NSW hospitals.

NSW Labor campaigned heavily on healthcare and hospitals and committed to a royal commission after a landmark report from the Health Services Union (HSU) in 2017.

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