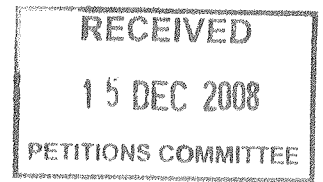
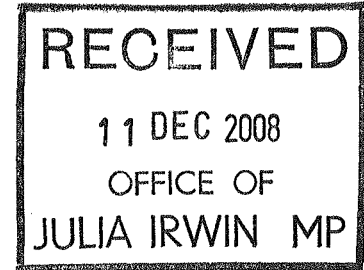




**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP  
MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AGEING**



Ms Julia Irwin MP  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Petitions  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Ms Irwin *Julia*

Thank you for your letter of 29 October 2008 regarding a petition submitted to the Standing Committee on Petitions concerning Kempsey Hospital.

The Commonwealth Government has committed to establishing the Health and Hospitals Fund to support future health infrastructure priorities. The Government has already committed \$5 billion to the Health and Hospitals Fund from the 2007-08 Budget surplus. Announced priorities for the Health and Hospitals Fund include capital expenditure and renewal and refurbishment of hospitals, major hospital facilities, medical technology equipment, and major medical research facilities and projects. Funding may also be provided to the States and Territories to assist them address major health infrastructure challenges. The Health and Hospitals Fund will be established from 1 January 2009.

I will soon be writing to various key stakeholders, including the State and Territory Governments, outlining the process for applying for funding from the Health and Hospitals Fund. I would welcome a proposal to consider Kempsey Hospital at this time.

Yours sincerely

**NICOLA ROXON**

- 8 DEC 2008