

Centenary Hospital building cladding assessment and replacement

ACT Health Buildings and Polyethylene Aluminium Composite Panels

- ACT Health has been proactive in identifying buildings that use Polyethylene Aluminium Composite Panels and assessing the impact this may have on ACT Health facilities.
- An independent assessment to determine the level of risk presented by Polyethylene Aluminium Composite Panels cladding products has been undertaken.
- The Centenary Hospital for Women and Children — a three storey building at Canberra Hospital — has been identified as using Polyethylene Aluminium Composite Panels in a very limited way as a façade cladding.
- Other buildings constructed post-2008 have been checked as part of a desktop review, and no other buildings were found to have used Polyethylene Aluminium Composite Panels.
- ACT Health, as a secondary activity, will be undertaking specification confirmation checks on cladding materials used at these other health facilities.
- ACT Health buildings are designed in a manner to ensure occupant safety in the event of a fire requiring building evacuation. This is complemented by the emergency training and planning that we undertake with our staff.
- It is important to emphasise that the Centenary Hospital was constructed in accordance with the building regulations and standards at the time as is the case with all ACT Health buildings.

How is Centenary Hospital affected?

- The façade cladding panels are decorative panels that have been installed onto a galvanized steel, water tight and fire rated structure in compliance with the relevant codes at the time of issue of the final Certificate of Occupancy and Use.
- Not all of the panels on the building contain the combustible polyethylene core and only some of the panels on the Centenary Hospital building will need to be replaced.
- Similar building products have been used in Australia since approximately 2006.
- All new ACT Health buildings since 2008 have received a Certificate of Occupancy certification confirming that buildings have been constructed in accordance with the building regulations at the time of their relevant completion.

- The ACT Government is thoroughly investigating any potential impacts to ensure our health facilities remain safe for the Canberra community. Any potential risks will be fully investigated with appropriate mitigation strategies put in place.

What is ACT Health going to do about Centenary Hospital?

- The independent assessment has made recommendations to remove and replace the material identified in certain areas of the Centenary Hospital building.
- Preliminary planning for remediation works to affected parts of the Centenary Hospital is currently underway with the targeted completion date for works to be confirmed.

What if there is a fire in the meantime?

- Staff and patient safety is our primary concern at all times. In the unlikely event of a fire, ACT Health is taking every reasonable precaution. We are working closely with our staff to boost fire preparedness at the hospital while the remediation work is underway.
- Our facilities comply with modern Australian building standards, emergency management standards and are fully fitted with sprinkler systems.
- Staff at Canberra Hospital and Centenary Hospital have been informed about this matter and will continue to remain updated as the work progresses.
- Canberra Hospital has well established emergency management protocols and procedures in place and we are confident patient and staff safety have been thoroughly managed.
- The Centenary Hospital is a modern building with a variety of building measures installed to protect all occupants during the unlikely event of a fire such that safe egress is provided. These systems are subject to regular testing to confirm functionality.
- The ACT Emergency Services Agency visited the Centenary Hospital in August to review current safety and emergency protocols and have advised ACT Health that they are fully satisfied with all precautionary measures currently in place.

Will current / expectant patients at the Centenary Hospital be affected by the remediation works?

- There will be no adverse impact on patients and visitors to the Centenary Hospital during the planning stages.
- All outpatient appointments will be maintained; all obstetric and gynaecological services will remain fully operational; and the full suite of services for paediatrics, young people and day stay clients will be available as per usual.

- As with other building maintenance and upgrade works that have taken place across Canberra Hospital, any additional noise or internal disruptions will be minimised by contractors and staff to ensure patients remain unaffected by these necessary works.

Will parking or road access into the Centenary Hospital be affected?

- There will be no adverse impact on patients and visitors accessing the Centenary Hospital during the planning stages.
- Free car parking facilities are available on the Canberra Hospital campus which range from all day, non-time regulated parking through to drop off set down areas at each building main entrance.
- The Southern Multi Storey Car Park is the primary parking area for visitors and patients, and is located at the opposite end of the campus. Therefore, this will not be affected by any of the remediation works that will take place at Centenary Hospital.
- A parking plan for contractors involved in the remediation works will be established, which will utilise overflow parking arrangements, so as not to impact upon visitor or patient parking.

How can I stay informed about this matter?

- Information will be available on the ACT Health website (www.health.act.gov.au) to ensure patients and staff have up to date information about this matter.
- You can also call Access Canberra 13 22 81.

What is the ACT Government doing to mitigate the risk of other government buildings being affected?

- A Working Group has been established to support the checking of buildings, including both Government and non-Government owned assets across the city.
- This Inter-Agency Building Cladding Working Group comprises professionals from our building policy units, including inspectors and members from the Emergency Services Agency.
- ACT Health has provided the independent assessment to the Working Group and will continue to work closely with them to ensure mitigation strategies are coordinated cohesively.