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# 'Was his death necessary?'



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**□ A wife in mourning:** Therese Mackay does not want her husband Don Mackay's death to be in vain.

By CLARE HAYES

A PORT Macquarie woman has lodged damning accusations with the NSW Health Complaints Commission over her husband's treatment at Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney.

She claims her dying husband, whose respiratory system was failing, was sent home with a ventilator on his request to say his farewells, but under the provision he would return the ventilator when he landed in Port Macquarie and die within three hours.

Don Mackay passed away on May 17 this year - his wife Therese Mackay claims it was a consequence of the hospital's lack of care.

Her submission to the complaints commission outlines what she believes to be fatal decision made during her quadriplegic husband's five-and-a-half week stay in the hospital for fluid on his lungs.

The claims follow news a pregnant woman in acute pain was left unattended for two hours at Royal North Shore Hospital before miscarrying in the hospital toilets.

Mrs Mackay said incidents at the hospital were clearly not isolated or restricted to pregnant women.

"If there are any complaints, if your relatives have suffered or you have suffered, now is the time to make them - and don't just send it to one person," Mrs Mackay said.

Mrs Mackay wants the state government to conduct a full inquiry into the hospital's management and practice.

The NSW Health Minister Reba Meagher rejected calls for a broader inquiry and said only the pregnant woman's case would be the focus of an

investigation.

Oxley MP Andrew Stoner said this was a sham.

"We need a broad inquiry where staff can be subpoenaed to give evidence by individuals not currently employed by the NSW Health system," he said.

"Many country patients travel to Royal North Shore Hospital for treatment and expect to receive a high standard of care.

"If true, the circumstances described by Therese Mackay are horrific and can be likened to conditions in a third world country."