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Media Release

02 May 2022

Aspen Medical statement in response to ABC Four Corners program of Monday 02 May 2022

Over the last two decades, Aspen Medical, an Australian company, has been selected by numerous State and Federal Australian governments as well as many international governments and companies, to provide critical emergency and remote location medical and health services. Aspen Medical is the only company in the world to be certified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as an Emergency Medical Team for infectious disease outbreaks and trauma surgical operations.

Our Australian team members are proud of the work we did to assist the country at a time of incredible and mounting challenges during the pandemic. The pandemic created an unprecedented set of circumstances in the health sector and across global and domestic supply chains. Under these conditions the Federal Government used numerous Australian companies, including Aspen Medical, to respond to the national demand for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This urgent demand was exacerbated by the fact that, especially in the early months, no one understood what the transmission rate or fatality rate would be, no vaccine yet existed, and the time needed to develop a vaccine was unknown. Against this complex background, it is unlikely that any company, or country, has ever needed to quickly secure and deliver PPE supplies on the scale that was required.

Aspen Medical secured unprecedented volumes of essential PPE for frontline line workers across the Australian health and hospital sectors, despite significant and mounting competition globally for these products as the pandemic evolved. We also provided targeted emergency support to aged care work forces where both Not For Profit (NFP) and private aged care operators lacked in-house infection prevention and control (IPC) capabilities or were unable to maintain safe staffing levels.

Aspen Medical requested and received a Commonwealth letter of support for Australian export in health services to other international Governments.

Letters of support were obtained from both the Australian Defence Export Office (DEO) and the Federal Department of Health in early 2020. These letters were only used for international export and not for any Australian Department of Health contracts.

International Governments, including successive Australian and State governments from both sides of politics, in addition to NGOs, such as the UN and WHO, have for many years enlisted commercial providers to complement government and NFP health services in times of major emergencies. We are immensely proud of the critical services and products we have delivered to protect and save tens of thousands of lives. We have provided important medical services in extremely difficult and challenging circumstances to supplement the work done by governments, corporates and NGO charities where their resources have been stretched or unable to fully meet the many challenges and crises they faced. For example, at the peak of the Ebola crisis in West Africa in 2014/15, Aspen Medical was contracted to support the UK, United States, Australian and New Zealand governments' efforts by managing multiple Ebola treatment centres across Liberia and Sierra Leone.

After a visit to the Australian Ebola Treatment Centre in early 2015, Senator Richard Di Natale commented (Senate Estimates, 26 February 2015): "I would like to begin by acknowledging the work that is being done by Aspen. While I was concerned about the awarding of the contract, having visited the facility, and seen the people involved I do want to put on record that the work that is being done now is of a very high quality. In terms of the level of support being offered, I was satisfied that it was of a very high standard. So, I want to put that on the record upfront."

This does not mean that the specialised healthcare providers working in the humanitarian space will supplant the charity or NFP healthcare providers. In fact, we (NGOs, Governments, Charity, NFPs and commercial organisations) are all needed to address the growing demand for healthcare in the humanitarian fields around the world. The COVID pandemic has shown the critical importance of working together in the past two years.

We believe that all organisations involved in this space should seek to confirm their Social Purpose and commitment to the highest standards of service delivery. Aspen Medical does this in several ways:

- [Being accredited by the WHO \(Aspen Medical is the only commercial entity accredited by the WHO as an Emergency Medical Team for infectious disease outbreaks and trauma surgical operations\)](#)
- [Being externally and independently audited and certified as a Benefit Corporation \(B Corp\)](#)
- Demonstrating social purpose
- [Demonstrated commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility \(CSR\)](#)
- Accreditation to a range of appropriate international operating standards

We can reflect on customer satisfaction levels which are best demonstrated by our team achieving a 100% retention rate for all current customers that conducted formal procurements over the past year. We view this retention rate as a testimony to the high-quality service delivery, professional standards and positive customer and patient outcomes that our team delivered despite the challenges experienced during the pandemic.

Aspen Medical is strongly against any corruption or corrupt practices wherever we work in the world. Aspen Medical is not involved in any money laundering investigation arising from its involvement of the Hambantota hospital contract and has never been contacted by any authorities, in Australia or elsewhere, about these matters, individuals mentioned in the programme or Sabre Vision Holdings. We only heard about the allegations five years after our contract concluded and they appear to relate to events unrelated to the Hambantota hospital project.

In relation to our pandemic work in the aged care sector, our team has proudly provided support to 415 Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs) across Australia and provided more than 65,000 hours of service at these facilities to our most vulnerable citizens. Our thoughts remain with the family and friends of all those residents impacted by the pandemic.

The tragic outbreak at St Basil's has been examined in detail by an [independent review commissioned by the Commonwealth, and conducted by Professor Lyn Gilbert AO and Adjunct Professor Alan Lilly](#). Aspen Medical was one of more than 20 healthcare providers, with Aspen Medical's role being the "provider of last resort" in terms of surge workforce to St Basil's. The independent review praised the efforts, skills, and experience of Aspen

Medical's Clinical First Responders. This independent review made no adverse findings against Aspen Medical in relation to our role at St Basil's. A coronial inquest is currently being conducted and its findings are expected later this year.

We are grateful to our team, and all healthcare and aged care professionals, for putting themselves in challenging and highly demanding situations day after day to assist the most vulnerable in Australia during this extraordinary time. Their dedication and bravery have been an inspiration to us all.

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