



**3 November 2008**

## **Ministers inspect site of Gosford Hospital's new Mental Health Unit**

Minister for Health, John Della Bosca and Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Mental Health) Barbara Perry today inspected the construction site for Gosford Hospital's new 30-bed Mental Health Unit.

Mr Della Bosca said the Rees Government is investing \$8.3 million in this year's budget to replace the existing 25-bed unit known as Mandala.

"This state-of-the-art facility is convenient and central to the rest of the Gosford Hospital site, providing easy access to the Emergency Department," Mr Della Bosca said.

"Mental Health is a key priority of the Rees Government, and we are committed to delivering better services, closer to home.

"In the past five years, the number of mental health beds on the Central Coast has more than tripled, from 25 to 80, a great improvement for the local community," he said.

The new Mental Health Unit will house 30 beds, including:

- Six observation beds
- Four vulnerable persons beds
- 20 general acute beds

Minister Assisting on Health (Mental Health) Barbara Perry said that preparatory work was well advanced on-site.

"This means we are one step closer to starting construction of the new Mental Health Unit," Ms Perry said.

"So far, the administration block as well as wards which opened in 1966 have been demolished.

"As part of the works, a new access road for emergency vehicles will be created with a direct connection to the Emergency Department."

Ms Perry said it was expected the site preparation works and emergency vehicle access road would be completed by the end of this year.

"The Rees Government will invest an additional \$4.7 million in the 2009/10 budget, with the facility to be constructed by early 2010," Ms Perry said.

Member for Gosford, Marie Andrews, welcomed the progress of the new facility and said the project was a big win for the local community.

"This means Central Coast families will have easy access to top class health services," Ms Andrews said.

"It's another example of the Rees Government delivering important services for the families of the Central Coast."