



17 December 2008

New Emergency Department for Children's Hospital Westmead

NSW Minister for Health, John Della Bosca, will today (Wednesday 17 December) open the newly renovated Emergency Department at The Children's Hospital Westmead.

Mr Della Bosca said the \$450,000 redevelopment, which includes eight new beds, is a major boost to young patients and their families.

"About 50,000 children come through this Emergency Department each year - and there has been an 18 per cent increase during the past five years - with staff treating injuries from broken bones to life threatening illnesses," the Minister said.

"The NSW Government is committed to delivering the best health facilities possible, which is why we've invested in making the Emergency Department more welcoming for children as well as more efficient for staff."

The redevelopment includes:

- An additional eight beds in the overnight stay ward;
- Reclining couches for parents who want to spend the night with their child;
- Three "fast-track" cubicles which allow rapid medical assessment in the event of a disaster with multiple casualties;
- Increased air-flow in the infectious waiting room to minimise the spread of air-borne viruses; and
- A waiting area for patients midway through their treatment will be created to avoid congestion in treatment areas.

"A significant number of children need to spend the night in hospital under close observation before they can go home, and these new beds give children a home away from home," Mr Della Bosca said.

"It's good news that the redevelopment is finished in time for Christmas, with an additional 250 kids visiting the emergency department last December compared to an average month.

"The new facilities will help get children home as soon as possible, recovering from their illness," the Minister said.

The Children's Hospital at Westmead is the largest paediatric centre in NSW, providing the most advanced care and treatment options for children from NSW, Australia and across the Pacific Rim.

Established in 1880, it is a stand-alone public Hospital and registered charity with 3,000 staff working in 150 departments. Over 60,000 sick children and their families are cared for each year in a family-focused, healing environment.

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The Children's Hospital offers a comprehensive range of tertiary and highly specialised services, including:

- NSW Paediatric Burns Unit
- The Paediatric Liver Transplant Unit
- The Neonatal Unit
- Intensive Care Service
- Cardiac Services
- Oncology Unit to support children and young adolescents with cancer.
- Emergency Department.
- The Child and Adolescent Psychological Treatment Outreach Service

In 2008/09 the NSW Government will invest \$218.9 million in the hospital, an increase of \$9.6 million on the previous year's budget.

For more information visit www.chw.edu.au