



John Della Bosca MLC
Minister for Health
Minister for the Central Coast
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

4 August 2009

Sydney Children's Medical Assessment Unit opens

Children suffering chronic illness who are frequent visitors to hospital emergency departments are now being attended to faster at Sydney Children's Hospital.

NSW Minister for Health, John Della Bosca, today opened the hospital's new Medical Assessment Unit (MAU).

"This \$2.1 million MAU highlights the NSW Government's commitment to improving access to health care for our growing population, a key component of *Caring Together: The Health Action Plan for NSW*," the Minister said.

"Children suffering from health conditions like gastroenteritis, fever and asthma will be initially assessed by staff in the Emergency Department (ED) and promptly handed over to the MAU for full assessment, treatment and short admission.

"The MAU is a 24 hour a day seven day a week service operated by a team of highly specialised doctors, nurses and allied health staff. They will work in close consultation with the Emergency Department.

"This new model of care will ensure children are moved quickly through the ED and are provided with the comprehensive care and support needed to recover as quickly as possible.

"With an unprecedented number of children presenting to Sydney Children's Hospital than ever before, the MAU will provide the ED with the beds and staff needed to focus on the sickest and most vulnerable children," the Minister said.

"Over the past couple of months, the hospital's ED has seen a marked increase in presentations. On its busiest day, there was a record 90 per cent more children, than the same time last year.

"The establishment of the new MAU aims to reduce ED waiting times and allow the hard working staff to focus on children with major traumas and life threatening illnesses.

"The first four beds of the hospital's MAU are now fully operational, with another four to open next week.

"This is the 20th Medical Assessment Unit to be opened in our state hospital system, part of a \$150 million program," the Minister said.