



**7 August 2009**

## **\$200 million Mater redevelopment sets new standard in health care**

NSW Minister for Health John Della Bosca has welcomed the official opening today of the \$200 million Mater redevelopment.

“Today’s official opening is the culmination of careful planning, design, construction and collaboration to deliver world standard health care services and facilities to patients and their families in the Hunter region and Northern NSW,” the Minister said.

“The redevelopment, one of the first health projects in NSW to be developed under a Public Private Partnership, is a prime example of how the private sector and government can work together to improve health services for families and communities.

“This landmark partnership also means new facilities can be built sooner and much needed services brought forward,” Mr Della Bosca said.

The redevelopment includes:

- An \$18-million expansion of cancer radiation therapy facilities
- A new clinical services building including wards and operating theatres
- A new Emergency Department and Intensive Care Unit
- New \$46 million mental health facilities, including a 100-bed Mental Health Centre for acute inpatient care.

“Importantly, the Mater redevelopment has been a major employer of people in the region - creating about 164 jobs during its construction,” Mr Della Bosca said.

Minister for the Hunter and Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer), Jodi McKay, said the \$18 million expansion of radiotherapy facilities at Calvary Mater Newcastle will see it become the largest radiation oncology service in NSW.

“The new service will deliver much-needed radiotherapy treatment to patients across the Hunter New England Area Health Service region,” Ms McKay said.

“The number of linear accelerators, or cancer treatment machines, has increased from three to five. This means more patients can be treated sooner and it will make a real difference for many patients who will no longer have to travel to Sydney for their treatment.

“The Government is delivering on its promise of investing in new health infrastructure.

“The Mater is the final component of the Newcastle Strategy, the largest health-related capital works program undertaken in the Hunter, which has already delivered the Royal Newcastle Centre, Newcastle Community Health Centre and a multi-million dollar upgrade of Belmont Hospital,” Ms McKay said.

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Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Mental Health) Barbara Perry hailed the relocation of Hunter New England Mental Health inpatient and outpatient services from James Fletcher Hospital as the start of a new era for mental health care in the region.

“The new 100-bed Mental Health Centre includes 10 additional acute beds and four Psychiatric Emergency Care Centre treatment spaces where emergency patients can be assessed and treated,” Ms Perry said.

“It enables enhanced care and treatment for patients, a better environment for staff and improved facilities for family and carers.

“Co-locating with Calvary Mater Newcastle also means patients have direct access to medical and specialist services, such as drug and alcohol and toxicology.

“Importantly, mental health has moved into the mainstream, helping to reduce the stigma often experienced by people in our community with a mental illness,” Ms Perry said.