



20 August 2009

New kids ward opens at award winning hospital

Children living in the Southern Highlands can now be treated in a state-of-the-art family-friendly kids ward at Bowral and District Hospital.

NSW Minister for Health, John Della Bosca, today officially opened the multi million dollar unit.

“Having a sick child in hospital can often be a stressful time for families, but these new facilities will be comforting to children and ensure mums and dads can be by their child’s bedside,” the Minister said.

The unit features:

- A designated parent’s lounge;
- Separate children’s play area;
- Televisions at each bed;
- Sofa beds for parents to stay overnight with their children;
- Two isolation rooms for children with infectious diseases; and
- An interview and clinic room.

Hospital General Manager, Denis Thomas, thanked the hard working staff and the community for their support during the upgrade.

“The community has contributed generously to the project, with the Berrima District Credit Union Children’s Foundation raising more than \$300,000,” Mr Thomas said.

Mr Della Bosca said the ward reaffirms the NSW Government’s commitment to providing quality health care to the people of the Southern Highlands.

“As well as the new kids ward, Bowral and District Hospital has undergone a number of other improvements over the past three years totalling around \$4 million,” the Minister said.

They include:

- A new Short Stay Unit where patients undergoing surgery who require day-only care are treated;
- Relocation and refurbishment of the Pre-Admission Clinic;
- Establishment of refurbished consulting rooms for staff Paediatricians;
- Refurbishment of the Allied Health outpatient treatment areas with additional dedicated therapy space;
- Installation of new nurse call systems and wandering patient alarms in the major ward;
- Refitting of the kitchen with new stainless steel fittings;

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- Construction of a new building to house the Clinical Records Department;
- Establishment of new Renal Dialysis services;
- Refurbishment of the High Dependency Unit bathroom/toilet facilities;
- Upgrading the fire protection and security systems; and
- Purchase of a cardiac monitoring system for the High Dependency and Emergency Departments...specialised ultrasound equipment to assist in the diagnosis of cardiac pathology...laparoscopic equipment to assist general surgery in theatres...orthopaedic equipment for theatres...and approval for installation of a second steriliser for the Clinical Sterilising Department.

“These are major upgrades which will allow us to continue to provide high quality services to the local community,” the Minister said.

“Earlier this month, I announced nurses at Bowral and District Hospital will be free to focus on patient care and safety, not paperwork, with the appointment of three fulltime and one part-time Clinical Support Officers (CSOs) this year.

“This is part of the \$117 million 2009-10 state budget roll-out of the first stage of the government’s *Caring Together: The Health Action Plan for NSW*.

“Ward-based CSOs will assist local nurses with administration and paperwork relating to recruitment, rostering, stock and supply orders and reports, to ensure they can spend more time caring for patients.

“The introduction of the CSOs will allow for a changing in the role of the senior nurse who’ll become the *Nurse in Charge* or *Midwife in Charge*,” the Minister said.

The burden of paperwork will be removed enabling them to focus on coordinating services and care around the needs of each patient, including:

- Responding immediately to any deterioration in a patient's condition;
- Supervising the work of junior staff;
- Ensuring patients and their families understand what is happening with their care;
- Making sure patients’ meals are served appropriately; and
- Making sure ward areas are clean and hygiene standards are maintained.

All this at an award winning hospital, Bowral named Best Performing Major Rural District Hospital at the 2008 Baxter Health Awards.