



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

28 August 2009

Faster treatment at The Tweed Hospital

People suffering chronic illness who are frequent visitors to the emergency department at The Tweed Hospital, will soon be attended to faster.

NSW Minister for Health, John Della Bosca, today announced a new eight-bed Medical Assessment Unit (MAU) will be established at the hospital as part of a state-wide \$150 million program.

“The MAU will alleviate pressure from the hospital’s busy emergency department and help meet the health needs of the rapidly growing Tweed Heads community,” the Minister said.

“From November, patients with chronic conditions such as respiratory illnesses, heart disease or diabetes can be diverted to the unit from the emergency department, so they can get treated more rapidly.

“Many patients with these types of conditions are elderly, with NSW Health data showing the number of people aged 75 years and older who are attending public hospital emergency departments has been rising by 20 per cent each year.

“Often these patients don't need emergency care and a busy emergency department is not the best place for them.

“The NSW Government has so far opened 22 Medical Assessment Units across the State as part of NSW Health’s HOPE -Healthcare for Older People Earlier- initiative,” the Minister said.

“Medical Assessment Units provide rapid multi-disciplinary assessment and management of complex medical patients in a model of care that links a patient’s care in hospital with care at home.

“However, patients with life-threatening conditions will continue to be treated in the emergency department.

“This is a great boost for the local community and is one of the ways the NSW Government is taking the pressure off hard-working emergency department doctors and nurses,” the Minister said.