



# **The Hon Jillian Skinner MP**

## **Minister for Health**

## **Minister for Medical Research**

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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4 July, 2012

#### **HEALTH MINISTER WELCOMES NEW TRANSITIONAL CARE SUPPORT FOR ELDERLY**

The Minister for Health, Jillian Skinner, today officially opened the state's newest transitional care facility at Belrose in the northern suburbs.

Mrs Skinner said she was excited to be working with the non-government sector on a facility that will assist older people who wish to stay living independently.

"Advancing age is associated with increasing rates of chronic disease and complex medical and longer term care issues," Mrs Skinner said.

"But an older person's stay in hospital during an acute illness or perhaps to repair a fracture after a fall should not always mean the start of a slippery slope into permanent aged care."

The NSW Ministry of Health through Northern Sydney Local Health District now provides an innovative program called the Transitional Aged Care Program (TACP), jointly funded by the Australian Government and the states and territories.

The program gives recuperating older people a 12 week period of extra support at home or in a community setting before any decisions are made about their future.

"Older people often lose some of their independence during hospitalisation," Mrs Skinner said.

"However, like athletes, many older people, given the time and opportunity to 'recondition', may well recover their pre-illness independence."

Mrs Skinner said a busy, acute care hospital simply cannot provide this type of service.

"But a Transitional Aged Care Program can," she added.

Local MP Jonathan O'Dea, the Member for Davidson, said the new facility will give older people the time they need to recuperate.

"Older people now have an opportunity to optimise their fitness and perhaps regain the ability to perform many activities before considering long term care requirements," Mr O'Dea said.

The Northern Sydney Transition Care Unit (NSTCU) is the latest community facility to provide this important opportunity to older people.

The new 20-bed facility is located in the Wesley Gardens Aged Care Facility, Morgan Road, Belrose.

Uniting Care Ageing (UCA), a respected and experienced provider of aged care services, is the primary partner in the Northern Sydney Transition Care Unit.

Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney will provide the low intensity therapy services that are a key component of the program.