



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

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LIFE-SAVING TECHNOLOGY BOOSTED AT LISMORE HOSPITAL

The Minister for Health and Minister Medical Research, Jillian Skinner, today visited Lismore Base Hospital to be updated firsthand on the installation progress of the facility's new PET/CT and MRI Scanners.

Minister Skinner was joined by the Minister for the North Coast and Member for Ballina, Don Page and the Member for Lismore, Thomas George during her visit to Lismore.

"It's great to be at Lismore today to see just how these important additions to the hospital will complement methods of care and improve outcomes for local patients," Mrs Skinner said.

"The PET/CT and MRI Scanners have been funded by the NSW and Commonwealth Governments to provide Lismore Hospital with the very latest and most sophisticated diagnostic equipment.

"Lismore and wider communities can rest assured that the NSW Government is committed to ensuring patients across the State have access to quality and contemporary health services and technology that have the potential to improve clinical care.

The Lismore PET/CT is one part of the broader North Coast Regional Cancer Centre project, which has been funded through the Health and Hospital Fund Regional Cancer Centre round. This has included a linear accelerator at Port Macquarie and an MRI at Coffs Harbour Hospital.

The NSW Government has committed \$3 million towards the project. The Commonwealth Government has contributed \$17 million toward this project.

In addition, Lismore will benefit from a new MRI scanner funded through the COAG Flexible Equipment Program for \$3.294M. The machine will also be eligible for Medicare which will ensure access to this important technology.

Mrs Skinner said the PET/CT scanners are important clinical tools, which provide a number of diagnostic benefits for patients.

"Positron emission tomography (PET) scanners are vital for picking up types of cancers, studying the brain's blood flow, finding damaged heart tissue following a

heart attack and spotting changes in the brain that may cause epilepsy,” Mrs Skinner said.

Mr George said the PET/CT and MRI Scanners will be in use within the coming months.

“I understand these machines will be fully operational in November – this is great news for local patients and their families.”

Mr Page said the hospital and wider community will soon see the benefits of the implementation of this technology.

“This is the highest level of diagnostic technology available in a regional area and therefore, is a significant enhancement for the Hospital. It means that people living in the Richmond Valley and surrounds requiring a PET/CT or MRI scan will no longer have to travel outside the area.”

During the visit, Minister Skinner had the opportunity to meet with Hazel Bridgett, Chair of the Northern NSW Local Health District, Chris Crawford, Chief Executive NNSW LHD and clinical staff.