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MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW ROBOTS CALL ROYAL NORTH SHORE HOME

Staff and patients at Royal North Shore Hospital will soon be greeted and assisted by 13 additional robotic staff members, Health Minister Jillian Skinner announced today.

Royal North Shore is the first hospital in Australia to use the robots (automated guided vehicles - AGVs) to transport food, linen and other supplies around its new acute services building.

"It is wonderful to see this technology whizzing around a NSW hospital for the benefit of staff at Royal North Shore," Mrs Skinner said.

"Every day these clever vehicles will deliver and collect around 3600 meal trays, hundreds of clean and dirty linen items and other waste from around the hospital.

"Not only will they assist staff to do their jobs more efficiently without the risk of painful injuries, they will reduce accidental cross-contamination of goods during transport.

"I know these robots will be particularly popular with staff, patients and visitors to the hospital."

Royal North Shore's 13 AGVs - purchased at a cost of about \$4 million - have arrived from Germany and will be fully operational this month.

The flatbed-style vehicles are designed to slide under trolleys for safe, quiet and efficient transport of supplies around the hospital.

The AGVs will travel in designated lifts and will not enter clinical areas. They are equipped with flashing lights, turn signals and audible voice technology that alerts people in the hospital corridors as the vehicles approach.

Member for Lane Cove, Anthony Roberts said it was wonderful news for the local community that the robots are calling Royal North Shore Hospital home.

"It's great to know that Royal North Shore will be the first hospital in Australia to use this innovative technology," Mr Roberts said.

"They are going to provide a number of benefits to staff and improve efficiencies at the hospital. These are all things that contribute to a more positive experience for patients."

The NSW Government's \$1.127 billion redevelopment of Royal North Shore Hospital is being built as a public private partnership which will see 53 buildings consolidated into purpose built facilities.

The recently completed Acute Services Building - the centrepiece of the redevelopment - includes:

- Inpatient wards for medical and surgical patients with a combination of one-bed and four-bed rooms
- An outpatients (ambulatory care) centre
- A new cancer care centre with additional chemotherapy chairs
- Additional renal dialysis chairs
- Enhanced diagnostic services and new clinical and information technology services
- 18 new operating theatres, in addition to theatres in the existing Douglas Building
- Capacity for a 58-bed intensive care unit with single rooms
- A range of retail and dining areas for staff and patients
- Automated guided vehicles to transport food, linen and waste around the hospital
- A new car park with 350 extra parking spaces and new roads and landscaping.

Construction of a Clinical Services Building and car park will follow, with both scheduled for completion in 2014.