



Kevin Humphries MP

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Healthy Lifestyles

Minister for Western NSW

MEDIA RELEASE

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MAJOR STEP FORWARD FOR SHOALHAVEN MENTAL HEALTH UNIT

The \$11.6 million Shoalhaven Subacute Adult Mental Health Unit reached a major milestone today with the main construction contract being awarded to Edwards Constructions, NSW Minister for Mental Health Kevin Humphries announced today.

Mr Humphries said the subacute mental health unit, funded by the Australian Government under the COAG New Subacute Beds Guarantee, will form an integral part of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District's mental health services.

"This state of the art facility will be the first unit of its kind in the Illawarra Shoalhaven region and will closely link to the acute mental health services at Shellharbour and Wollongong," Mr Humphries said.

"Once completed, the facility will allow more people who need additional support to manage a mental health condition to receive that support in their local community, close to their families, friends, workplaces and schools."

The project includes:

- a 20 bed Mental Health Subacute Unit for short stay admissions;
- multiple elevated internal court yard areas;
- quiet activity areas for patient treatment and therapies.

Member for Kiama, Gareth Ward, said construction work is expected to commence within the coming weeks.

"This facility will usher in a new standard of mental health care for people living in the Illawarra Shoalhaven region by allowing treatment in a non-restrictive, home-like environment that will greatly assist recovery and allow people to integrate back into the community," Mr Ward said.

Member for South Coast, Shelley Hancock, said the facility is expected to be completed in early 2014.

"The opening of the unit will ensure a large number of Shoalhaven adult mental health patients that are currently cared for at Shellharbour Hospital will be able to receive inpatient care closer to home," Mrs Hancock said.

"I am looking forward to the unit being opened and delivering the best quality care to the residents of the Illawarra Shoalhaven region."