



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW SERVICES IMPROVING PATIENT CARE IN THE HUNTER

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today toured John Hunter and John Hunter Children's hospitals to launch two new services which will improve care for patients across the region.

Mrs Skinner, who was joined by Charlestown MP Andrew Cornwell, said a dedicated operating theatre for obstetric patients is a boost for maternity services offered at John Hunter Hospital.

"This new \$2 million theatre, complemented by state-of-the-art new surgical equipment, goes a long way to enhancing the quality of care providing to women and their babies at John Hunter Hospital," Mrs Skinner said.

"For those birthing women who require emergency care, the new theatre will allow them swifter access to surgery with less waiting for caesarean procedures or obstetric operations.

"Having a theatre exclusively for the use of birthing mothers increases the capacity for the wider surgical workload of the hospital, including emergency and elective surgery cases," Mrs Skinner said.

Dr Cornwell said the addition of the new theatre will be of great support to local mothers and their families.

"As a new dad, I know how important it is for mums-to-be to have access to quick care when they need it most," Dr Cornwell said.

"I thank the hospital's maternity ward staff for the incredible work they do. This new theatre is of benefit to them, as well as local patients."

The new maternity theatre project was made possible by the NSW Surgical Service Taskforce, which works to ensure appropriate planning for emergency surgical workload in all specialties across the health sector.

During the visit, Mrs Skinner and Dr Cornwell also officially opened the John Hunter Children's Hospital Complex Pain Service.

"Local children and young people suffering chronic pain now have access to enhanced life-changing treatment through this service," Mrs Skinner said.

“These pain clinics have been launched in conjunction with the NSW Pain Management Plan and, as I’ve visited many across the state, I have had the opportunity to see firsthand how they are changing the lives of patients and their families.

“The service, which has been established in partnership with the NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation, provides assessment, education and treatment to improve the quality of life for children and young people who experience chronic pain,” Mrs Skinner said.

“A variety of pain management strategies - including individualised pain management programs - work to reduce pain and reintegrate children and young people back into their functional lives.”

Dr Cornwell said the new pain clinic will allow young patients access to multidisciplinary care – a first for the region.

“Now patients and their families have timely access to a pain specialist, clinical nurse consultant, physiotherapist and clinical psychologist,” Dr Cornwell said.

“I have no doubt this clinic will do much to assist young people to get back on their feet and live life to their fullest potential.”

For more information on the NSW Pain Management Plan, please visit:

http://www0.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2012/pdf/nsw_pain_management_plan_.pdf