



# **Jillian Skinner MP**

## **Minister for Health**

## **Minister for Medical Research**

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Thursday, 5 December 2013

#### **PATIENTS TO BENEFIT FROM NEW \$6.4M KURRI KURRI SUB-ACUTE UNIT**

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today announced patients and staff have moved into the newly completed \$6.4 million sub-acute unit at Kurri Kurri Hospital.

Mrs Skinner said the new, purpose-built 14-bed unit would help older people maintain independent living.

“For those patients who are well but not quite ready to head home, sub-acute units play a supportive role in the discharge process,” Mrs Skinner said.

“This specialised facility will provide specialised orthogeriatric assessment and rehabilitation for patients who have had orthopaedic surgery, particularly elderly patients who need extra support before they can safely return home.

“Patients who have received acute care following a fall, illness or surgery are given extra time to recuperate so when they do go home they are less likely to be re-admitted for the same condition.

“Sub-acute units play a vital role in the delivery of health care across the state as they allow patients a greater period of time to recuperate from complex conditions.

“This means an unnecessary stay in an acute hospital bed can be avoided to ensure patients with more complex conditions are able to access the vital care they need.

“The new sub-acute services at Kurri Kurri, in addition to the new 16-bed sub-acute unit opened at Belmont Hospital this year, will help take pressure off our existing acute hospital services by keeping more beds available for very unwell people most in need of acute care.”

Mrs Skinner said the delivery of the \$6.4 million sub-acute unit complements the Clinical Services Plan for the Hunter Valley.

“Hunter New England Local Health District’s Clinical Services Plan identifies Kurri Kurri as an important complementary facility in the wider network of Hunter Valley hospitals. The sub acute unit will continue to provide orthopaedic rehabilitation to older people now and well into the future after the new hospital at Metford is opened.”

The construction of the facility was made possible by the Australian Government under the Improving Public Hospital Services National Partnership Agreement COAG Subacute Bed Guarantee Program which provided an \$11 million investment into Hunter subacute care. The NSW Government will cover the operating costs of the unit.