



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

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ILLAWARRA ELECTIVE SURGERY CENTRE REACHES NEW HEIGHTS

Wollongong Hospital is celebrating a major milestone with the \$106 million redevelopment reaching the highest point in construction, Health Minister Jillian Skinner said today.

Mrs Skinner was joined by Kiama MP Gareth Ward and Heathcote MP Lee Evans at Wollongong Hospital to mark the milestone with a topping out ceremony.

The topping out ceremony is a long-held building tradition. At Wollongong Hospital a pine tree was lifted onto the roof, six storeys above the ground.

“After turning the first sod on this project 18 months ago, it’s a delight to celebrate this milestone with hospital staff and of course the many tradespeople, builders and suppliers who have helped raise this structure from the ground,” Mrs Skinner said.

“The NSW Government is proud of its \$86 million commitment to enhance the surgical capabilities of Wollongong Hospital and the \$20 million expansion of the emergency department and new ambulatory care centre as part of this redevelopment.

“This is a hospital that delivers first-class care and the Elective Surgical Services Centre will be a first-class facility.

“It will improve access to surgical services, enhance coordination and provision of multi-disciplinary health services locally and help reduce elective surgical waiting lists.

“The NSW Government is getting on with the job of rebuilding our hospitals and this is boosting morale and seeing enhanced care for patients,” Mrs Skinner said.

Mr Ward said more than 130 local contractors have worked on the project so far, helping to deliver around 58,000 hours of work.

“There are enormous flow-on benefits from the NSW Government’s investment in redeveloping local health services,” Mr Ward said.

“Upon completion of the Illawarra Elective Surgical Services Centre, it is expected about 400 local contractors will have been part of its construction.

“I know Wollongong Hospital staff and the community share my excitement about the progress on this redevelopment.”

Mr Evans said patients and staff will benefit from the enhancement to Wollongong Hospital.

“Patients will have timely access to planned surgeries and staff will be able to deliver the first-class care they are known for in a first-class facility,” Mr Evans said.

“It is wonderful to have the Health Minister here today to celebrate this milestone with our community.”

Mrs Skinner said Wollongong has been a hub of construction activity since the NSW Liberals & Nationals came to government.

“In addition to the \$106 million Illawarra Elective Surgical Services Centre, the \$14 million Illawarra Cancer Care Centre expansion was opened in November and construction has also commenced on the \$27.8 million multi-storey car park for Wollongong Hospital,” Mrs Skinner said.

“These works will change the way health care is delivered to the Illawarra community.”

The \$106 million Illawarra Elective Surgical Services Centre will deliver:

- Seven new operating theatres;
- 14 stage 1 recovery beds;
- 72 new surgical beds, including 12 extended day-only beds and 10 new close observation beds;
- Six additional Intensive Care Unit/High Dependency Unit beds in a new 24-bed unit;
- Ten new emergency department treatment spaces;
- One new and three refurbished resuscitation bays;
- A new ambulatory care facility providing 22 clinical spaces;
- New central sterilising department;
- New linen stores, loading dock area and food services works.

Mrs Skinner, Mr Ward and Mr Evans also viewed progress on the \$27.8 million Wollongong Hospital car park. The new parking complex will provide more than 700 additional car spaces in a multi-storey facility adjacent to the existing car park on New Dapto Road, next to the Wollongong Hospital.

The new facility will increase car spaces at the hospital to 1,274 - adding to the 434 on-street spaces within 500m of the campus - and will connect to the Hospital via the existing pedestrian bridge across New Dapto Road.

Construction began last month, with works scheduled for completion in the second half of 2015.

Construction on the Illawarra Elective Surgical Services Centre project is also scheduled for completion in late 2015.