



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

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HEALTH ENHANCEMENTS FOR THE HUNTER

Health Minister Jillian Skinner and Member for Maitland Robyn Parker today toured the John Hunter Hospital campus to view enhancements to health services which will benefit patients and staff.

Mrs Skinner and Ms Parker viewed progress on the extension of John Hunter Hospital's main car park and visited the Department of Forensic Medicine to see the facility's new CT scanner.

"The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is getting on with the job of enhancing health services in the Hunter and these investments are making a difference for both patients and staff," Mrs Skinner said.

"The car park developments at both John Hunter and Calvary Mater Newcastle represent an investment of about \$15 million to enhance parking options at these facilities.

"The John Hunter Hospital car park development will now deliver more than 740 additional car spaces, following the approval of plans for a fifth stage which will include an additional 118 spaces.

"This brings the total number of car parking spaces on the campus to more than 3,400 and will be the biggest enhancement to campus car parking since John Hunter Hospital opened in 1991."

Ms Parker said work to build the additional car parks at the John Hunter campus is in full swing.

"The three-storey car park is really starting to take shape. Concrete slabs are being poured and the structure is on schedule for completion in the second half of 2015," Ms Parker said.

"It is developments like these that make a real difference to both patients and staff, particularly those travelling from outside the local area."

Mrs Skinner said planning is progressing for the new car park at Calvary Mater Newcastle, with work expected to start in early 2015.

"Parking will be boosted by about 270 spaces when the new car parking facility opens in the second half of 2015," Mrs Skinner said.

“The car park will be used as staff car parking, which will free up spaces closer to the hospital for patients, their families and visitors.

“Access to parking is an important issue for the community and I applaud Hunter New England Local Health District for boosting the number of car spaces so significantly,” Mrs Skinner said.

Mrs Skinner said the \$600,000 new CT scanner at Newcastle’s Department of Forensic Medicine is being used for post-mortem results – a first for NSW.

“The CT scanner is providing faster post-mortem results and minimising distress for families grieving the loss of a loved one,” Mrs Skinner said.

“The scanner’s sophisticated imaging ability means forensic pathologists are able to capture highly detailed scans of bones and internal tissues, which helps them prepare more comprehensive reports for the NSW Coroner.”

Ms Parker said: “This new scanner means that for some cases our forensic pathologists can determine cause of death more quickly and in the least invasive way.

“It also means families can take comfort their loved ones’ remains have been handled with the utmost dignity and can be returned to them as quickly as possible so they can carry out funeral arrangements.”