



# **Jillian Skinner MP**

## **Minister for Health**

## **Minister for Medical Research**

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Wednesday 19 November 2014

#### **WORKS UNDERWAY ON NEW BYRON CENTRAL SITE**

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today said work is well underway on the site of the new Byron Central Hospital, with bulldozers paving the way for the facility, which is valued at more than \$80 million.

Mrs Skinner said the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is forging ahead with the construction of the new Byron Central Hospital after 16 years of hollow pledges under Labor.

“Labor spent almost two decades delivering nothing but empty promises to the Byron Shire community – a new hospital was talked about but never funded,” Mrs Skinner said.

“In stark contrast, the NSW Liberals & Nationals have not dithered on this project – we have committed the funding and work is now well underway to secure the foundations of the new hospital.

“Ballina MP Don Page has worked tirelessly to see a new hospital delivered for his electorate. The works happening on-site are testament to the commitment of Don and the Byron Shire community to see this facility become a reality.

“The project is already providing opportunities for local businesses, with locally engaged consultants on site as well as fencing, signage and civil works contractors from the Byron region.”

Mrs Skinner said the NSW Government committed \$1.5 million in the 2014/15 Budget for planning and early works to commence on the new hospital.

“The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is committed to ensuring regional communities have access to first-class health care closer to home. The new Byron Central Hospital will deliver this and much more,” Mrs Skinner said.

“Sadly Labor continues its scare campaign about the services provided by the new Byron Central Hospital. This is rich considering they did not invest a single cent to build the new facility.

“I want to assure the community the new Byron Central Hospital will be a public hospital which provides free public health care for public patients.”

Ballina MP Don Page welcomed the start of works at the Ewingsdale site.

“I join the community in their excitement to see bulldozers now on the site of the new Byron Central Hospital,” Mr Page said.

“This work clearly shows after decades of broken promises by Labor, the NSW Liberals & Nationals are serious about delivering enhanced health services for our community.”

The new Byron Central Hospital is expected to deliver:

- 24-hour accident and emergency services;
- 43 overnight inpatient beds;
- A low-risk maternity service;
- X-ray and medical imaging services;
- A new 20-bed non-acute mental health unit;
- Dental service;
- Chemotherapy service.

A market sounding process is underway to gauge whether there is interest from the private sector to deliver a day surgery unit for both public and private patients  
Byron District and Mullumbimby hospitals will remain fully operational until Byron Central Hospital opens in mid-2016.