



Jillian Skinner
Minister for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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ILLAWARRA'S NEW SURGICAL SERVICES CENTRE OFFICIALLY OPENED

Health Minister Jillian Skinner and Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast Gareth Ward visited Wollongong Hospital today to officially open the Illawarra Elective Surgical Services Centre (IESS).

The purpose-built centre is the most significant capital works project undertaken at Wollongong Hospital for more than a decade and the jewel in the crown of the \$106 million redevelopment of the campus.

It features seven additional operating theatres, more than 100 new beds, a larger intensive care unit (ICU), an ambulatory care centre, an expanded emergency department, linen stores, a loading dock area and food services works.

Mrs Skinner said it took two years of construction and more than 468,000 hours of work on the project to complete the modern, light and state-of-the-art facility, which has transformed spaces like the ICU and improved outlooks to the hills rather than dark internal areas.

"I visited the hospital many times during construction and I'm pleased the community is seeing the benefits of this hi-tech upgrade," Mrs Skinner said.

"Wollongong Hospital can now deliver improved and advanced services, especially in urology and vascular surgery, meaning surgeons are equipped to perform more complex cases that previously may have needed referral to Sydney."

Today's tour included a first-hand look at one of two new hybrid operating suites which combine medical imaging capability and surgery, and an inspection of the new multi-million dollar central sterilising services department.

Mr Ward said the new facility will strengthen links with leading research bodies and attract skilled professionals to the region, ultimately delivering better health outcomes.

"This redevelopment will add to Wollongong's strength as a major teaching and specialist referral centre for the Illawarra and Shoalhaven region," Mr Ward said.

“For 16 years Labor talked about upgrading Wollongong Hospital and today the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government has delivered.”

In addition to the redevelopment of the hospital, patients, visitors and staff continue to reap the benefits of the \$30.5 million parking facility upgrade, which has delivered more than 700 additional car spaces - more than doubling parking capacity to cope with increased demand on the IESS and the hospital in the years to come.