



# **Jillian Skinner MP**

## **Minister for Health**

## **Minister for Medical Research**

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Thursday 5 March 2015

#### **PATIENTS TO BENEFIT FROM BOOST TO MAITLAND AND KURRI KURRI HOSPITALS**

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today announced a \$5.3 million investment to expand services at Maitland and Kurri Kurri hospitals to deliver enhanced care for patients and relieve pressure on staff at the facilities.

Mrs Skinner said the Baird Government will deliver 16 additional acute beds at Maitland Hospital to boost clinical care for patients and relieve pressure on the emergency department.

“Maitland is a busy hospital and these beds will do much to assist staff to deliver their quality care for patients in a more timely fashion,” Mrs Skinner said.

“The Baird Government is committed to delivering the new Maitland Hospital and this \$5.3 million investment will assist the current hospital to cope with patient demand until it is built.

“The beds will alleviate pressure on the hospital as they will ensure a smoother, swifter transition of patients from the emergency department into a ward bed or discharge home.”

To create capacity for the acute beds at Maitland, 12 rehabilitation beds will be moved from Maitland to Kurri Kurri Hospital to consolidate the region’s rehabilitation services and increase the current beds on-site from 14 to 26.

Construction work will be undertaken to expand the existing rehabilitation unit at Kurri Kurri. The physiotherapy department outpatient waiting room at Maitland Hospital will also be expanded to improve patient comfort.

The 12-month project is expected to be complete in early 2016.

Mrs Skinner said the work forms part of the Baird Government’s commitment to the new Maitland Hospital project, which is creating more capacity in local hospitals until the new hospital is built.

“I can guarantee public patients will receive free public health care at the new Maitland Hospital,” Mrs Skinner said.

“The Baird Government’s commitment to building a new hospital for Maitland is unwavering.

“In the meantime, this \$5.3 million investment will be a welcome boost for staff at both Maitland and Kurri Kurri hospitals to provide additional capacity to meet the ongoing demand of planned and unplanned admissions.

“The new Maitland Hospital will be magnificent but it won’t be built overnight which is why investing in current services is important to ensure the community has access to quality care.

“The new Maitland Hospital project is the biggest health planning exercise this region has seen in more than 20 years and only the Baird Government can be trusted to deliver it.”

Liberal candidate for Maitland Steve Thomson said: “This is great news for patients across our region and will go a long way to assisting staff until the state-of-the-art new hospital for Maitland is up and running.”

Nationals candidate for Cessnock Jessica Price-Purnell said: “This is a win for local patients and staff and shows the Baird Government is delivering on its pledge to enhance regional health services.”

Mrs Skinner said Labor has not committed a cent to enhance hospitals in Maitland and the lower Hunter.

“Labor is all talk and no action when it comes to the new Maitland Hospital - it continues to put politics before patient care,” Mrs Skinner said.

“In stark contrast, the Baird Government is getting on with the job of enhancing health services for the benefit of patients in Maitland and beyond.”

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