News Release – *April 6 2004*

Minister for Health

$241 million boost to mental health funding

NSW Minister for Health Morris Iemma said the Government was today delivering on its commitment to boost mental health funding, with an extra $241 million over the next four years.

Mr Iemma said the additional funds would go towards acute, sub-acute and community mental health services

The $241 million boost will be spent on:

- Additional funding for acute mental health care beds;
- Additional supported accommodation places;
- $14 million additional recurrent funding for the new forensic hospital at Malabar;
- More community –based mental health professionals, including nurses;
- Better co-ordination and case management of forensic patients;
- Expansion of the successful court liaison program;
- More child psychiatrists and inpatient programs for children; and
- Additional Aboriginal mental health workers

The 2004/05 Health capital works budget also includes funds for:

- Completion of planning and start of works on the redevelopment of Lismore's Richmond Clinic, including 15 extra beds and an eight-bed Child and Adolescent Unit;
- Planning funds for the establishment of a 15 bed older persons mental health unit in Wollongong;
- Continuation of works in progress including units at Macquarie and Campbelltown hospitals;
- Planning for an additional 80 medium security and community care units

Mr Iemma said the additional funding recognised the valuable work over the past two years of the Select Committee Inquiry into Mental Health Services and the Sentinel Events Review Committee.

"Our focus on acute care, sub acute care and community-based care is aimed at providing the assistance people need, when and where they need it, in the community to minimise the need for inpatient care.

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