

Media Realease

MINISTER FOR HEALTH

24 May 2004

Premier Carr opens new Prince of Wales Hospital Mental Health Rehabilitation Unit

The Premier of NSW, Mr Bob Carr and NSW Minister for Health, Mr Morris Iemma today officially opened the new 14 bed Mental Health Rehabilitation Unit at Prince of Wales Hospital.

Mr Carr said the new unit would focus on assisting patients suffering ongoing mental illnesses.

"These patients suffer from an illness that affects their ability to live independently in the community.

"This service will provide medium term accommodation and care for around three to six months for patients who have already received acute psychiatric treatment."

Mr Iemma said the new service is designed to help patients better prepare for a return to the community to reduce the prospect of re-admission.

"It will also help to ease the pressure on acute mental health beds required for patients presenting through the Emergency Department who require urgent, intensive treatment."

The Prince of Wales Hospital Mental Health Rehabilitation Unit was established at a cost of \$1.8 million, with recurrent costs expected to total approximately \$2 million.

It was funded under the \$20 million Mental Health Accelerated Beds Initiative announced by the NSW Government in 2002/03 and is not part the \$241 million allocated from April's mini-budget for mental health.

The Accelerated Beds program involves the roll-out of around 440 mental health beds, including 118 supported accommodation places in the community.

Some of the other new units to have opened recently under the program include:

- a 30 bed unit at Sutherland Hospital;
- a 25 bed unit at Wollongong Hospital;
- a 10 bed unit at Kempsey Hospital;
- 28 child and adolescent beds in three new units in Sydney and the Hunter;

- 20 non-acute beds at the Henley Unit at Macquarie Hospital; and
- New clinical working areas at Bloomfield Hospital in Orange

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