

Minister for Health

New Gosford Health Centre To Provide Better Care To Local Families

15 January 2003

Gosford families will have better access to a range of community-based health services following the official opening today of the Central Coast Child and Family Services Centre in the Gosford CBD.

NSW Health Minister, Craig Knowles, opened the facility in the Gateway Centre, saying its location and the comprehensive range of services would make it easier than ever for local families to get good health care.

"This centre brings together the staff and services previously located across two sites - the Gosford hospital and the centre in North Gosford.

"The Gateway Centre is close to public transport and has excellent parking nearby.

"By bringing together services such as the Family Care Cottage, early childhood nursing, child and family psychiatry and social work, staff are able to work more effectively as a team to provide the best care possible.

"This Government has worked toward delivering health care closer to where people live and this development will make getting to these vital services easier than ever," said Mr Knowles.

Mr Knowles said the refurbishment of the Centre and the relocation of health services had cost \$1.352 million and was part of the massive \$208 million redevelopment of health care facilities on the Central Coast.

"The Central Coast is a part of the State where we are seeing significant population growth and it is essential that we act now to ensure that local families - both now and in the future - have health facilities and health services that meet their needs.

"This Centre is a perfect example of how local planning, to match local needs can deliver the best result possible for the community."

"By 2006 it is expected that the Central Coast will be home to around 320,000 people, with many families residing in Gosford. Given this level of expansion facilities such as this Centre and the Gosford Hospital must be located and equipped appropriately now in order that the future needs of this community can be met," said Mr Knowles.

"It is gratifying to see the health needs of our community being matched not just with infrastructure but with the development of health services.

"One of the outcomes of the Central Coast Health Access Plan will be the addition of over 700 extra staff to deliver more health care. This is in addition to the hundreds of work opportunities created by such a large construction element."

The Child and Family Health Services Centre will accommodate early childhood nursing, including clinics and parenting groups; well baby clinics; the Family Care Cottage; genetic counselling; paediatric physiotherapy; perinatal psychiatry; speech therapy; occupational therapy; orthoptist services; community paediatric nurses and community paediatricians; social workers; immunisation clinics and the Family Assessment Counselling Education and Therapy Service (FACET).

While on the Central Coast Mr Knowles also inspected construction work on the \$3.8 million Community Health Centre at Erina.

"Both these projects are important parts of a master plan that will see the Central Coast become home to some of the finest health facilities in the state," said Mr Knowles.