



**Special Minister of State
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Minister for Disability Services
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Mental Health beds triple on the Central Coast

Minister for Disability Services, John Della Bosca, said the completion of the Wyong Mental Health Centre this week had tripled the availability of mental health beds on the Central Coast.

Mr Della Bosca today inspected the facility with the incoming Minister for the Central Coast, The Entrance MP Grant McBride.

Officially opened in May 2004, the new 50-bed facility located at Wyong Hospital commenced a staged opening schedule due to a nationwide shortage of mental health professionals.

The Wyong Centre initially opened 10 beds in the older persons section, with the final beds coming on line this week.

“The Area Health Service undertook a vigorous recruitment campaign, both nationally and internationally to attract senior mental health nurses and skilled medical professionals to the region,” Mr Della Bosca said.

“The Central Coast now has 75 mental health beds including 25 located at the Gosford Hospital campus.

“The Area Health Service now has increased capacity to support the growing demand for mental health services on the Central Coast.”

Wyong Mental Health Centre has three separate patient areas including a 15-bed older persons unit (Miri Miri), a 10-bed high-level observation unit (Gunyah) and a 25-bed adult acute mental health unit (Tamarind).

With individual patient rooms, group dining areas and separate courtyards for each of the three patient areas, Wyong Mental Health Centre enables space for social interaction as well as more private areas to suit other patients.

The Carr Government increased the State’s mental health budget by \$68 million to \$783 million in 2004-2005, a 121 per cent increase since 1994/1995.

The rebuilding and upgrading of Gosford and Wyong Hospitals is part of the State’s record \$7.5 billion infrastructure budget this year. Record sums are also being spent on staff: NSW nurses are the best paid in the country as a result of salary increases of almost 20 per cent since 2002.

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