

MEDIA RELEASE

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Plans announced to refurbish Warwick Hospital's emergency department

Darling Downs Hospital and Health (DDHH) Board Chair Mr Mike Horan AM has announced a \$3 million project to refurbish Warwick Hospital's emergency department.

The announcement was made during the DDHH Board's regular meeting which was held at the Southern Downs hospital today.

"Each day the Warwick Hospital's emergency department sees, on average, more than 50 patients," Mr Horan said.

"In the last financial year, 19,255 people attended the unit seeking medical treatment.

"Year to date, emergency department staff have worked hard to ensure that more than 90 per cent of these patients are treated, admitted, discharged or transferred within recommended time frames. However, it is a busy department and, like most hospitals across the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service, the demand for its services is not slowing down.

"To accommodate this demand, Aspect Architects and Project Managers from Toowoomba have been appointed to come up with a design to improve patient flow through the department and to improve working conditions for staff.

"The new design will also incorporate room for increased capacity."

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Cameron Dick said the initiative was a good example of a hospital and health service being able to fulfil a local need.

"Hospital and health services manage the delivery of services across Queensland, and in this case, the effective financial management of the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service has allowed this expansion to happen," Mr Dick said.

"Through that prudent financial management, the delivery of services continues to improve in the Darling Downs region."

Mr Dick said the refurbishment was good news for both the people of Warwick and hospital staff.

"Emergency department staff do a great job - day in, day out. And this project in Warwick is hopefully going to make their jobs a little easier and improve the experiences of people that need to be treated in the department."

The early design stage of the project will include consultation with hospital staff including medical officers, nurses and mental health clinicians, as well as Queensland Ambulance Service representatives.

Planning for the project is expected to take four to six months, with the works anticipated to start early next year.

The project follows the recent \$1.7 million upgrade of the hospital's electrical systems. Other recent projects at the facility include upgrades to the water and sewage services (worth \$487,000), new floor coverings (\$230,000) and refurbishment of the kitchen (\$1.2 million).

"The DDHH Board's investment in the Southern Downs is testament of our vision to deliver excellence in rural and regional healthcare," Mr Horan said.

Background

The DDHH Board met at the Warwick Hospital today for its regular monthly meeting which is held in a rural location every second month.

Part of the Board's visit to the Southern Downs included a tour of the Warwick Hospital and Oaks Aged Care Facility as well as an afternoon tea with staff and a lunch with community members.

The Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service (DDHHS), which includes Warwick Hospital, delivers hospital and healthcare services to a population of nearly 300,000 and covers an area of approximately 90,000 square kilometres, around one-and-a-half times the size of Tasmania.

The DDHHS delivers care from 20 hospitals and six residential care facilities, and manages an annual budget of more than \$670 million.

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