

MEDIA RELEASE

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Dinner dance set to celebrate Baillie Henderson Hospital's 125th anniversary

Baillie Henderson Hospital is set to celebrate 125 years of providing mental health care in May.

Executive Director Mental Health Ms Shirley Wigan said a dinner dance would be held on Saturday 16 May to recognise the important milestone.

"Mental health services began on the site of the current hospital on 17 May 1890," Ms Wigan said.

"Dr James Hogg – after whom Hogg Street was named - was the first Medical Superintendent appointed in 1890," she said.

"Within a year the hospital had 200 patients so the campus grew to accommodate more patients and staff. The hospital had a number of names but was finally named Baillie Henderson Hospital after Dr John Baillie Henderson who was Medical Superintendent in 1950."

Ms Wigan said Baillie Henderson Hospital would continue to offer mental health services at the campus into the future.

"The hospital played a pioneering role in the development of community-based mental health treatment options, establishing its first community mental health nursing service in 1977.

"We are now in the process of transitioning further mental health consumers to community-based models of care which offer contemporary, recovery-focused programs.

"This will include moving consumers to the new community care unit (CCU) at Kearney Springs and similar facilities elsewhere in the state if the consumer has family or other social support networks there. These units will be staffed 24 hours per day by trained mental health professionals, including mental health nurses.

"The Baillie campus continues to have several mental health wards which provide care to around 100 consumers."

Ms Wigan said the 125th anniversary was an apt time to reflect on and celebrate the hospital's rich history.

"Many dedicated mental health professionals have made their mark in history by improving conditions and care for those with mental illness, assisting a large number of patients to return to successful community living."

A special tree-planting ceremony will be held at the hospital at 10am on Friday 15 May as part of the celebrations, which are supported by the Toowoomba Hospital Foundation.

All current and former staff and others who have an interest in the hospital are invited to come to the dinner dance at Rumours International from 6.30 for 7pm on 16 May. Tickets are \$65 (including a three-course meal and entertainment) and are available from the Toowoomba Hospital Foundation by phoning (07) 4616 6166 or calling in to the office at 41 Joyce Street, Toowoomba during business hours.

Ends

Caption: Long-time Baillie Henderson Hospital staff members Di Rogers (left) and Barbara Bishop hold a photo of the hospital's first Medical Superintendent, Dr James Hogg. The photo frame is made from skirting board from a former building at the facility.

MEDIA: *Contact Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service Media Team 4699 8547, 0438 702 328 or DDHHS_media@health.qld.gov.au*