

## MEDIA RELEASE

24 October 2016

### Board members tour Murgon Hospital

Murgon Hospital played host to members of the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Board who visited the hospital today for their monthly meeting.

The meeting was an opportunity to announce a project to build a new ambulance ramp at the South Burnett facility.

Board Chair Mr Mike Horan AM said the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) had been instrumental in the design of the new ramp to make it wider and easier to manoeuvre patients into the Emergency Department.

“It will be moved to the other end of the building closer to the ED so QAS officers will no longer need to wheel patients through other parts of the hospital to access emergency care,” he said

“It will also provide easier access to the hospital’s helipad.”

The ramp, valued at more than \$190,000, will be constructed under the \$50.6 million Backlog Maintenance Remediation Program (BMRP) which includes a host of works across the DDHHS to improve local facilities.

The visit was an opportunity to inspect the new solar panels that have been installed as part of Energy Queensland’s *Business Solar Saver* trial.

Ergon Retail has supplied, installed and will now maintain around 100 280-watt solar panels which have been placed on the roof of the hospital.

Acting Cluster Operations Manager South Burnett Julie Kelly said the installation had been very professional and while it had little impact on the staff or patients, the new solar panels had caused some discussion around town.

“People have been joking that the hospital will be powering all of Murgon,” Ms Kelly said.

“We will be the ‘bright light’ in town,” she said.

Darling Downs Hospital and Health Board Chair Mr Mike Horan said Ergon Retail had approached the DDHHS about the possibility of participating in the trial.

“Murgon Hospital is the first hospital in the DDHHS where this has been done and we are keen to undertake the trial with a view of potentially expanding the service across other hospitals in the future.

“It’s estimated that the solar panels will reduce the hospital’s monthly energy bill by approximately 23 per cent, a saving of around \$10,000 per year.

“This is a great way to ensure that our hospitals are as efficient as possible but also environmentally sustainable,” Mr Horan said.

Part of the Board’s visit included a presentation to outgoing Board member Terry Fleischfresser, who finished with the Board in May this year.

Mr Horan thanked Mr Fleischfresser for his time on the DDHH Board and presented him with a framed photograph and commemorative book.

The Board also spent time meeting with local community members over lunch.

## **Background**

The DDHH Board holds its regular monthly meeting in a rural location every second month.

The Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service (DDHHS), which includes the South Burnett, 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.

## **Ends**

**MEDIA:** Contact Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service Media Team 4699 8547, 0438 702 328 or [DDHHS\\_media@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:DDHHS_media@health.qld.gov.au)

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