

MEDIA RELEASE

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Photo caption:

Bevan Muller, Capital Works program manager; Wendy Fitzgerald, manager Stanthorpe Hospital Operational Services; Lee Hunter, DDHHS principal coordinator maintenance; Dom Drew, site manager; Jan Faulconbridge, director of nursing and Silvia Pozzebon, acting nurse unit manager, meet to discuss plans for Stanthorpe Hospital's air-conditioning upgrade

Nearly \$2 million combined air-conditioning and infrastructure maintenance project at Stanthorpe Hospital welcomed

A project to install air-conditioning and perform building maintenance works at Stanthorpe Hospital, at a cost of nearly \$2 million, is set to start this week.

Darling Downs Hospital and Health Board Chair Mr Mike Horan AM announced the project to provide a new heating and cooling system at the hospital, an upgrade to the 78-year-old main building's passive fire safety system, and a disability ramp to the main reception entrance.

"The works include replacing the hot water boiler heating system in the wards of the hospital's main building and also in the maternity and nursery areas of the Western Annexe," Mr Horan said.

"The air-conditioning unit in theatre will be replaced with a modern equivalent.

"The birthing suite had upgraded air-conditioning installed when it was refurbished in 2014.

"I am sure patients, visitors and staff will welcome the upgrade to make the hospital much more comfortable in both winter and summer as some of the ward areas had limited heating and no cooling equipment.

"The current project also includes the installation of new air-conditioning in Ludlow Lodge, the staff accommodation on the hospital campus."

Mr Horan said the project included an upgrade to the hospital's electricity capacity to support the air-conditioning upgrade. This will be completed prior to the completion of the air conditioning project in January 2017.

The hospital's Director of Nursing Ms Jan Faulconbridge said there would be some short-term changes to wards while the works were undertaken over the next eight or so months.

"The fire safety work is being undertaken at the same time as the air conditioning work to minimise disruption to the hospital," Ms Faulconbridge said.

“We are working closely with the contractors to stage the works and keep disruptions to a minimum, but we will need to relocate some beds and nurses’ stations at different times to allow the project to progress.

“We will continue to accommodate maternity patients in a separate area and there will be no reduction in the number of available beds.

“We are keeping in touch with the hospital’s community consultative committee about the needed changes and progress of the works, and anyone with questions is welcome to get in touch with me through the hospital.

“I’m sure the improvements to the air-conditioning will be greatly appreciated and any inconvenience in the installation phase will be worth it.”

The air-conditioning project is funded under the \$50.6 million Backlog Maintenance Remediation Program which has seen hundreds of projects carried out across the hospital and health service’s 26 facilities since July 2013.

Other works at Stanthorpe Hospital have included replacement of the roofs on outpatient and mental health buildings, upgrade of roads at the back of the campus to re-divert stormwater, upgrade of the helipad, upgrade of sewer lines, and replacement of flooring in the staff accommodation.

Planning is also underway for further works to improve stormwater drainage on site and some repairs to car parks and road surfaces.

Ends

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