MINISTER FOR HEALTH

IMPROVING TERRITORY HOSPITALS FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE

13 May, 2014

Budget 2014 represents the biggest injection of Northern Territory Government funding into our hospitals, to expand, improve and maintain services for all Territorians.

“Royal Darwin Hospital is one of the busiest Tertiary hospitals in the country, and it is important that we keep investing in the Territory’s main referral hospital,” Minister for Health Robyn Lambley said.

“We are investing $36.8 million more in NT Government funding for Territory hospitals this budget, compared with last year's budget,” Mrs Lambley said.

Royal Darwin Hospital will receive $22.8 million in new upgrades, including the first stage of the $11.9 million Commonwealth funded refurbishment of the hospital’s paediatric ward.

Last year the paediatric ward treated 2543 children, and the refurbishment means that paediatric services will be on the same level and will be purpose built to provide excellent paediatric care.

The $22.2 million Commonwealth funded upgrade of the Royal Darwin Hospital Short Stay Unit and Operating Theatre expansion is also 50% complete.

Mrs Lambley said building works for the two new operating theatres began last month, with the Extended Emergency Medical Unit for the ED to commence in August.

“The upgrade is expected to be completed by early next year and will greatly improve RDH’s capacity to provide elective surgery and reduced congestion and waiting times in ED for Territorians.”

Nearly $7 million has been allocated to upgrade negative pressure rooms, and a further $4.2 million to improve fire control measures at RDH.

The budget also continues the investment of $4.46 million to provide an additional 400 elective surgeries per year.

Cardiac services will continue to receive $6.5 million for enhanced outreach and rehabilitation services, and to offer Territorians access to the new angioplasty surgery service in the NT.

Mrs Lambley said Budget 2014 also recognises the Territory’s need for a new hospital in the Top End.

“This budget confirms the $150 million Territory and Commonwealth funded first stage of the major Palmerston Regional Hospital development.

“An extra $160,000 has been allocated to the Alice Springs Hospital’s new Emergency Department, bringing the total additional funding to support the operation of the ED to $5.7 million.
"The Alice Springs Hospital is also set to receive $5.2 million in Commonwealth funding to create a multi-disciplinary teaching and training facility.

"Alice Springs Hospital will become a significant contributor to a clinical teaching and training hub in Central Australia, delivering high quality training to multi-disciplinary hospital staff and our remote workforce.

"The teaching and training facility will include a 100 seat lecture theatre with advance audio visual capability, two simulation labs, four conference rooms with video conferencing capability and student work areas."

Alice Springs Hospital will also receive $29.9 million for continued fire protection, air-conditioning and remediation works, including upgrades to emergency power and water systems.

Nearly $2 million has been allocated for air-conditioning upgrades at Katherine Hospital.

MEDIA CONTACT: Phoebe Stewart 0438885774