

**STRICT EMBARGO 1030** 8 August 2004

### **SYDNEY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OPENS CAMPBELLTOWN UNIT**

One of NSW most respected medical institutions The Sydney Children's Hospital is breaking new ground opening a new paediatric unit at Campbelltown Hospital in Sydney's south-west.

The new unit will offer:

- paediatric surgery
- enhanced paediatric emergency medicine, neurology and
- a specialist service for children with diabetes

The unit brings to Campbelltown services that families would have otherwise had to travel to Randwick or Westmead to receive.

Three new paediatric specialists will be cross appointed between Sydney Children's Hospital and Campbelltown Hospital to deliver the new services.

NSW Health Minister, Morris Iemma, hailed the initiative as an example of how improved clinical linkages between hospitals can deliver better services for NSW families.

"There are already strong links between the medical specialists and staff of the Sydney Children's Hospital and Campbelltown Hospital," Mr Iemma said.

"The creation of the Sydney Children's Hospital Macarthur Unit, is turning those linkages into better health care for families in south-western Sydney.

South-western Sydney is the fastest growing area of metropolitan NSW with young families driving that growth.

The Minister said the number of children and young people living in the area was forecast to increase from 295,000 to 310,000 between now and 2011.

"Every year 13,000 children visit the Emergency Department at Campbelltown Hospital and the 30 bed paediatric ward admits about 3,500 children," Mr Iemma said.

"From today they will have access to significantly enhanced services that they would have otherwise had to travel to Randwick or Westmead to receive.

These include:

- **Paediatric surgery.** A new service which will see a full time staff specialist paediatric surgeon recruited to work as a joint appointment between Sydney Children's and South Western Sydney Area Health Service

- **Paediatric emergency medicine.** Campbelltown Hospital's well established paediatric emergency service will be enhanced with a telehealth link to Sydney Children's Hospital allowing combined teaching rounds with Sydney Children's Hospital.
- **Paediatric endocrinology.** This specialist service will provide care for children living in the south-west with diabetes and other endocrine conditions such as hypothyroidism. Children with these conditions would have previously travelled to Westmead or Randwick.
- **Paediatric neurology.** A new service for Campbelltown providing specialist care for children suffering epilepsy, muscular, neurological and developmental conditions. This permanent service will replace a local clinic that was only open once a month.
- **A NSW Centre for Community Child Health.** In a NSW first, a Centre for Community Child Health will be established in south-western Sydney, with a senior academic of Community Paediatrics cross appointed between Sydney Children's Hospital, South Western Sydney Area Health Service and University of New South Wales.
- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health.** A joint child and adolescent mental health unit will be formed between the two hospitals with shared appointments of clinical staff, clinical, safety and quality protocols.

Campbelltown and Camden hospitals director of Paediatrics Dr Andrew McDonald said the partnership was a great step forward for the parents and children of Campbelltown.

"This will make a big difference the lives of many of our sick children who will no longer have to travel the 50 kilometres to Sydney's eastern suburbs for their care, and will now be able to receive it very close to home at Campbelltown Hospital," he said.

"We hope that this new system of networking will lead the way for other units in NSW who care for our children," Dr McDonald said.

Minister Iemma said the creation of the Macarthur Unit will ensure that all staff specialists from Campbelltown will now spend time at Sydney Children's Hospital, while established cross appointments between the two hospitals will also be strengthened.

"The Sydney Children's Hospital is one of the icons of our health system, this initiative will ensure that more families will benefit from the expertise and services the hospital can offer," Mr Iemma said.

**OFFICE CONTACT : Ben Wilson 0407 966083**