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## **\$100 Million to Deliver Much Needed RHH Improvements**

The State Government's \$100 million investment in the Royal Hobart Hospital will deliver major service improvements and ensure the Royal remains safe and reliable until a new hospital is built.

Health Minister Lara Giddings said the postponement of the New Royal project meant Tasmania was confronted with an immediate challenge to prolong the life of the existing hospital.

"Despite the tough economic times, action needs to be taken now. We can't wait until we can afford a new hospital," Ms Giddings said.

"\$100 million over five years will be made available to address the hospital's ageing buildings and infrastructure and to improve and expand key services such as intensive care."

Ms Giddings said a number of high priority works will be carried out focusing on safety, reliability, efficiency and increasing space and capacity.

"An upgrade and expansion of the Intensive Care Unit and High Dependency Unit will help improve surgical throughput in the main theatres, especially in the areas of neurosurgery and cardiothoracic surgery.

"It is anticipated that eight more beds will be added to the ICU and HDU, bringing the total number to 25.

"It is very important that we tackle areas that we know are causing frustration for clinical staff and improvements to these two areas will bring marked improvements.

"The funding will also create space to enable installation of the \$3.5 million public PET/CT scanner funded by the Federal Government."

Ms Giddings said some of the other anticipated projects that will be included in the program of high priority works include;

- creation of a combined clinic area where out-patient functions can be consolidated in one location to improve efficiency and free up space in other parts of the hospital;
- relocation and expansion of the Ambulatory Care Unit and Oncology Unit;
- expansion of the recovery area in the Day Procedures Unit, including a 23 hour recovery unit to give clinical staff more flexibility in scheduling elective surgery;
- upgrading general wards to optimise bed capacity and improve storage, educational and bathroom facilities;

- upgrading and improving storage rooms, the loading dock and kitchen;
- upgrading information and communication services, electrical services, mechanical plant (air-conditioning), lift services and plumbing and fire safety; and
- redevelopment of Medical Imaging to improve efficiency and to accommodate the proposed PET/CT scanner.

Ms Giddings said the works would ensure the Royal remains up to standard while the global financial crisis takes its course.

“I want staff at the Royal to know that we have listened to their concerns about the current site and intend to address them as best we can.

“Action on the priority works outlined today will make life that bit easier for staff at the Royal while our long term strategy is developed.

“Meetings will be held with staff to discuss the improvements in more detail soon and all staff are encouraged to contact the New Royal Project Team on 6233 4517 if they have any questions,” Ms Giddings said.

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