



MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release
14 February 2006

SUBJECT: Two private hospitals for Hervey Bay

Two private hospitals have opened in Hervey Bay to augment services offered by a modern base Hospital.

St Stephen's Private Hospital, established in Maryborough in 1946, has expanded into Hervey Bay and started surgical operations in February.

The new hospital, operated by Uniting HealthCare and the Uniting Church, is being built directly across the road from the Hervey Bay Hospital.

The project will be built in stages.

Stage one, a \$5 million day hospital accepted its first patients on February 14. The facility will service patients who have Department of Veteran Affairs cover, private health cover and self-funded patients.

This first stage of the master planned medical precinct has two operating theatres and a day oncology unit. The day hospital will provide a wide range of specialities including ophthalmology, general surgery and gastroenterology.

Construction of an adjacent medical centre, including pathology, radiology, pharmacy and specialist consulting rooms, will start soon.

Stage two of the development will comprise a 60-bed inpatient hospital and a further two operating theatres. The development has been approved by the Hervey Bay City Council.

Hervey Bay residents also have access to the latest in surgical technology with the opening of the eight-bed Hervey Bay Surgical Centre.

The hospital has six-standard beds and two high dependency beds in the centre of the city's Central Business District.

The hospital has three theatres and will specialise in ophthalmology, gastroenterology and orthopaedic procedures.

The hospital, which is owned by the attending specialist doctors, will be able to perform major procedures such as joint replacements. Cutting edge computer-aided surgical technology developed in Europe will be used by surgeons at the centre.

The facility will be the first in Australia to use the computer-navigation system that maps out the surgical procedure for the doctors.

The computer equipment is part of the \$2.5 million investment the doctors have made in equipment at the hospital.

The longer term plans include an expansion in the number of beds at the hospital and more specialists.

The facility has up to 40 employees.

ENDS