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State-wide hospital review

NSW Minister for Health, John Della Bosca, has announced a clinician-led state-wide review to assess each public hospital's role in providing safe, high quality patient care in the public health network.

Mr Della Bosca said the initiative followed a recommendation of Commissioner Garling, to assess and evaluate the volume and quality of hospital services and how the workforce can provide safe care.

The Special Commission of Inquiry recommended (Rec 117) the following actions:

- Determine whether each hospital's location, workforce, surrounding population, state of repair and equipment, delivers safe patient care;
- Re-allocate specialist medical services to hospitals in NSW best placed to deliver those services;
- Ensure a clear delineation of the role of each hospital – what it can and can't do;
- Develop a set of criteria on patient safety, necessary workforce skills and the volume and quality of services in all NSW public hospitals;
- Help communities understand the role of their local hospital and its limitations;
- Consider the availability of an efficient transport and retrieval system to take patients to the hospital best placed to provide the medical service they require, and return them to their original location.

"Local services are very important to the NSW community and they are the door to the excellence of the entire system," Mr Della Bosca said.

"This clinician-led review will consult the community and the health workforce so we can agree together on what health services are needed now and what can be safely provided into the future.

"As the Garling Report points out, NSW has one of the better public health care systems in the developed world, but we must meet the challenge posed by the growing numbers of older patients with multiple chronic illnesses.

"Supported by existing health service plans, the review will analyse population size and distribution, ageing, level of disease, changing models of care and lifestyle to agree on services that are needed and can be provided safely. We will then look at other health facilities in the area and the availability of a skilled workforce.

"Planning for the review will begin immediately.

"The first step is to consider and discuss what we need as a community and to plan together for the future, with care for the patient at the centre of everything we do," he said.

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The Minister today also announced a new Major Trauma Network for NSW, comprising six Adult Major Trauma Services and three Paediatric Trauma Services.

“Every hospital across NSW is part of a critical care network, however treatment for major trauma is provided at a number of specialist hospitals - *Major Trauma Centres* - where there are very high levels of clinical expertise and concentrated support services,” Mr Della Bosca said.

“To meet current and future community demands, continued improvements are required to ensure a sustainable, strategically located trauma system.

“Commissioner Garling proposed three adult Major Trauma Services in the Sydney metropolitan area and one Major Trauma Service for rural NSW located in Newcastle.
(Rec 116)

“This arrangement was not supported during the consultations with clinicians and the community and it was not consistent with the evidence-based service planning undertaken over several years in this clinical area,” Mr Della Bosca said.

The new NSW Major Trauma Network follows extensive consultation with trauma clinicians and the Ambulance Service of NSW. The Network will comprise six Major Adult Trauma Services at:

- John Hunter Hospital
- Royal North Shore Hospital
- Royal Prince Alfred Hospital
- St George Hospital
- Liverpool Hospital
- Westmead Hospital

And three Paediatric Trauma Services at:

- John Hunter Children's Hospital
- Sydney Children's Hospital
- Children's Hospital, Westmead

“Spinal cord injury at Prince of Wales and Royal North Shore Hospitals, and severe burn injury services at Concord, Royal North Shore and the Children's Hospital at Westmead will remain integral components of the NSW Trauma System,” Mr Della Bosca said.

“Following input from a range of clinicians, each of these services will be networked with the remainder of the trauma system, comprised of regional trauma services for people with moderate trauma injury and local hospitals for other injuries in metropolitan and rural areas.

“The reconfiguration of Major Trauma Services in NSW is based on the national and international literature, taking into consideration elements of other trauma system models relevant to the delivery of health services in NSW.

“This approach will provide the best possible health service for trauma patients across the State,” the Minister added.

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