



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION: ACUTE MENTAL HEALTH INPATIENT UNIT - COURTYARD

Appointment of builder marks significant milestone

Construction for the Broken Hill Health Service Redevelopment will soon get underway following the appointment of the building contractor.

NSW Health Infrastructure Executive Director for Rural and Regional, Amanda Bock said construction contractor Barpa has been engaged following a competitive tender process to build the redevelopment.

“The appointment of the construction contractor is a significant milestone in the delivery of this project, which will ensure Broken Hill and surrounding far west communities have access to improved health facilities, now and into the future,” Ms Bock said.

Construction is expected to start in the coming weeks, following a comprehensive planning and design process which has helped shape the new health facilities for Broken Hill.

“Extensive engagement with the local community, including the Aboriginal community, has helped inform the design, ensuring the new spaces will be culturally safe and welcoming.”

Barpa is a majority Indigenous-owned construction business with experience in delivering health projects and working in rural and regional areas across NSW, including construction of the Buronga HealthOne, Medowie Ambulance Station and the Hay Health Service.



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION: EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT DROP-OFF AND NEW ENTRY

Ms Bock said the contractor will be reaching out to the local community including trades, businesses, and suppliers about opportunities to be involved in construction for the redevelopment.

“We are committed to helping create new training and job opportunities throughout construction, which also provides a significant boost to the local economy, and we look forward to sharing more information about opportunities for this project,” Ms Bock said.

Arts Program cultural advisors co-design workshop

Engagement with the arts has a beneficial impact on wellbeing and helps to deliver welcoming, calming and dynamic health care spaces for patients, carers, staff and families.

The upgraded Emergency Department and Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit at Broken Hill Hospital will integrate art that reflects the unique and diverse community of Broken Hill, creating culturally appropriate and welcoming spaces to complement health service delivery.

An Arts in Health Strategy was developed by Health Infrastructure in consultation with a local Arts Working Group in 2023. In March 2024 a workshop was held with local Aboriginal community members who provided cultural advice to guide the integration of arts for the new development.



The artworks developed as part of the Broken Hill Arts in Health Strategy are to be led by our partners at West Darling Arts and the Broken Hill City Art Gallery.

Expressions of interest for local artists will be advertised shortly.

Take 5 with Denise Jack Director of Mental Health Drug & Alcohol Services, Far West Local Health District



What is your role and what does it involve?

As the Director of Mental Health Drug & Alcohol Far West, my role is expansive. As well as having the Inpatient and community services across the district, we also have a number of Mental Health Branch and Ministry of Health initiated funded programs. My role is to ensure we have services

that meet the current needs of community across the life span. Ensuring partnerships and governance is key to ensuring the teams are functioning and operating in an ever-changing landscape and demand for service needs.

What is your background?

I have been with Far West Local Health District since September 2023 and I am enjoying being back in a rural and remote setting. I love the creativity, solutions focused and can-do attitudes of the teams and the community in which we serve. I arrived in Australia in 2013 and have worked in a variety of roles in a few local health districts across NSW Health. Mental Health has been my vocation and passion for over 30 years now after training as a psychiatric nurse in the UK. I have held numerous positions in both private and public sectors, and my career has allowed me to find Australia is home! I am proud to be a citizen and enjoy learning about the heritage and culture.

How involved have you been in the planning and design of the new Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit?

The planning and design had already occurred before I arrived, so I was not involved in any of the Project User Groups unfortunately. The team and community have done well with the design and my challenge now will be to strategize new ways of working for the operational success of the unit.

What do you think will be the benefits on the new unit?

That it is purpose-built and a safe place for people with a lived experience of mental health, alcohol and other drugs, or trauma. Being able to be flexible with the unit pods for the requirements and need of the person is such an advantage to the new build. And the location - it will be good to have the mental health unit in close proximity to the mental health recovery unit and the Safe Haven, as it will create a flow of acceptance and working models can be integrated.

What are you most looking forward to in the new unit?

A safe place for people when they are acutely unwell and a purpose-built building for staff to carry out therapeutic engagement. A safe and comfortable environment for visitors when visiting loved ones where we can also practice child-safe standards whilst children are visiting the facility. And most importantly we are not hidden! By being in our own standalone purpose-built unit I do hope it reduces the stigma of mental health issues.

How are the mental health staff feeling about the new unit?

It is exciting! We are looking at recruitment and working groups are about to commence on ways of working and models of care. We also have a lot of exciting training opportunities for staff to get "unit ready". As expected, staff have questions around how the new building will work, there needs to be new ways of working and models of care to reflect the flexible 3-pod modular system that the staff will move into.



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION: KEY WORKER ACCOMODATION PROGRAM

Design milestone reached for Broken Hill's new Key Worker Accommodation

Broken Hill is being given its first look at the design of 20 key worker accommodation units which will be installed on the hospital site as part of the NSW Government's Key Worker Accommodation (KWA) Program.

The artist's impression of the exterior design has been released along with details of a key worker accommodation prototype unit which was recently completed off-site.

The units will support health care workers looking to establish themselves in the Broken Hill community by providing accommodation close to work, which is a key factor in attracting and retaining health workers at rural and regional hospitals.

The modern and self-contained units will be fully furnished and equipped with all the necessities including kitchens, bedrooms, ensuite bathrooms, living and outdoor areas.

Construction of Broken Hill's accommodation units will commence off-site shortly, with delivery and on-site installation on the hospital site off Morgan Street expected to start later this year. The accommodation is expected to become available to key workers in early 2025.



Click the thumbnail or scan the QR code to watch a video about the KWA prototype unit.



Scan the QR code for more information about the KWA Program.



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About the Broken Hill Health Service Redevelopment

In April 2022, the NSW Government announced the Broken Hill Health Service Redevelopment.

The redevelopment includes the construction of a new purpose-built Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit, which is being delivered under the NSW Government's \$700 million Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program. It will provide a contemporary, culturally safe, and therapeutic space with co-designed facilities for people with mental health needs, their families, carers and staff.

It also includes a \$10 million upgrade and expansion of the hospital's Emergency Department, which will be reconfigured to better meet the critical health needs of the region and includes a new dedicated 24/7 entry, a larger light-filled waiting area, and tailored treatment spaces for children and those requiring mental health services.

Next steps

A sod turn event to mark the start of construction is currently being planned and is expected to take place shortly.

Work on the Acute MHIPU and ED will take place simultaneously and staff, patients and visitors will be kept informed when works commence, and as it progresses, to ensure they are aware of any disruptions or impacts.

The ED will remain operational throughout the upgrade. Plans will be in place to minimise interruptions to service delivery during the construction period and staff and the community will be kept informed in advance of any planned changes.

Health Infrastructure, Far west Local health District and Broken Hill Health Service acknowledges the Traditional Custodians on whose lands the redevelopment project stands and pays respect to the peoples of the Wilyakali and Barkindji Nation, the Traditional Owners of this land.

For more information and FAQs

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