



THE HON KEVIN RUDD MP
Prime Minister

THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP
Minister for Health and Ageing

THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP
Minister for Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

25 August 2009

Funding Boost for Elective Surgery at Port Macquarie Base Hospital

The Rudd Government today announced over \$200,000 in funding to help reduce elective surgery waiting lists at Port Macquarie Base Hospital.

The extra \$217,959 funding will enable the hospital to purchase much needed additional surgical equipment to help reduce waiting times for elective surgery.

The Prime Minister will today visit the hospital as part of the Government's road-testing of the National Health and Hospital Reform Commission's proposed reforms.

The Prime Minister will outline the Commission's recommendations, and meet with local health professionals to hear what they believe are the priorities in improving health and hospitals around the country.

Targeting key pressure points in our health system, like elective surgery waiting times, is a priority for the Rudd Government.

The funding announced today builds on the Government's Rural and Remote Workforce Package in the 2009-10 Budget, which will see previously ineligible communities such as Port Macquarie, Camden Haven and Taree become eligible for a number of workforce incentives to help tackle workforce shortages.

This means the community will be able to attract more GPs via relocation incentives of up to \$15,000 and retention incentives of up to \$12,000 per annum.

In addition, the Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program supports ten specialist services to Port Macquarie so that local residents can access the care they need without having to travel to a major metropolitan location.

Services provided in Port Macquarie under the program are geriatric psychiatry, palliative care, dermatology, endocrinology, neurology, respiratory, neuro-surgery and general psychiatry.

The Rudd Government is taking concrete steps to improve Australia's health and hospital system after twelve years of neglect by the previous Liberal Government.

For all media inquiries, please contact the Minister's Office on 02 6277 7220.