



**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP**

**Minister for Health and Ageing**

**DAMIAN HALE MP**

**Member for Solomon**

**THE HON KON VATSKALIS MLA**

**NT Minister for Health**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**9 July 2009**

**\$4.3 million to take pressure off Royal Darwin Hospital**

The Rudd Government will provide \$4.3 million to improve Royal Darwin Hospital's emergency department.

The funding will allow for the reconfiguration of the emergency department at a cost of \$2.3 million and \$2 million for new staff to work in the paediatric facility.

This investment builds on our investment of \$1 million to construct two new operating theatres and purchase important medical equipment under our elective surgery wait list reduction strategy.

The Minister for Health and Ageing and Member for Solomon toured the new facilities today with Territory Health Minister Kon Vatskalis.

The Minister for Health and Ageing, Nicola Roxon, said today's announcement would expand the emergency department's capacity – improving the quality of treatment, and assist to reduce waiting times, in emergency care.

Ms Roxon said, "Nationally, we are investing \$750 million in public hospitals to help take the pressure off our emergency departments."

"Of this, the Northern Territory has received nearly \$10 million to expand emergency department capacity across the Top End, and increase the health workforce," said Ms Roxon.

Member for Solomon, Damian Hale, welcomed today's announcement as a further investment in the health of residents in Solomon.

Mr Hale said, "Today's visit by the Minister for Health and Ageing shows we are committed to investing in repairing 12 years of neglect by the Howard Government.

"We can see today that our \$1 million has allowed for additional equipment and construction of two new operating theatres at Royal Darwin.

"Today's announcement will assist in taking pressure off the busy emergency department at Royal Darwin and with recruiting paediatric staff to our hospital," said Mr Hale.

Northern Territory Health Minister, Kon Vatskalis, said the Territory Government was working in partnership with the Commonwealth to deliver improved outcomes for Territorians.

"This builds on the record funding delivered by the Territory Government in Budget 2009 with \$245 million to be spent at Royal Darwin Hospital," said Mr Vatskalis.

These investments build on other health investments made by the Rudd Government to the people of Solomon:

- \$19m for a Radiation Oncology Unit at Royal Darwin Hospital
- \$10m for the Palmerston GP Super Clinic
- \$34 Million to build a Centre of Excellence in Indigenous Health and Education
- \$27.8 Million for Flinders University to run a full medical program in the Northern Territory.
- The NT Government will also be provided with \$4.4 Million to support increased teaching and medical places for local students.
- \$18.6 Million to build an accommodation complex of 50 units on the grounds of the Royal Darwin Hospital

**Media inquires to Minister Roxon's Office 02 6277 7220 or Mark Ward in Darwin 0437 125 938**