

# Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program



Project Update – August 2023

## Project overview

**A new mental health unit is being built at Tamworth Hospital as part of the \$700 million Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program.**

The new facility will include 37 beds, 12 more than the existing Banksia unit:

- 20-bed adult area
- 5-bed adult high-acuity area
- 8-bed older persons' area
- 4-bed adolescent area
- Child and Adolescent Community Mental Health Services

The schematic and detailed designs for the unit were completed after extensive consultation with staff, consumers, carers, community members and the local Aboriginal community.

Early works started in April, creating extra car parking spaces across the hospital campus that will result in a net increase of 40+ public parking spaces by September. Main construction works are expected to start later this year and the new building is scheduled to open by 2025.



## Detailed designs unveiled for new unit

Detailed designs are now completed for the new 37-bed mental health unit at Tamworth Hospital. The new facility will replace the Banksia Mental Health Unit, providing a modern facility that links directly to the hospital.



*The main entry to the unit, with access to the Child and Adolescent Community Mental Health Services to the left and entry to the inpatient areas via the stairs and lift to the right. (Artist's impression)*

The new mental health unit will be built on two levels and include direct enclosed access to the hospital via a new walkway. New staff offices will occupy the third level.

The first level comprises the main entrance lobby for direct access to Child and Adolescent Community Mental Health Services, and stair and lift access to the adolescent, adult and older persons' mental health inpatient beds and facilities.

A welcoming light-filled atrium and calming colours inspired by the three rivers surrounding Tamworth are among the highlights of the new facility.

Several sustainability initiatives have been incorporated into the design to achieve a five-star energy rating, including solar panels to improve energy performance and reduce carbon; and an improved thermal envelope to reduce energy consumption.

**Note: The images in this newsletter are artist's impressions only. Final designs will evolve as consultation continues.**

For more information, [visit our website](#) or contact [HI-Banksia@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:HI-Banksia@health.nsw.gov.au).



A typical inpatient bedroom. (Artist's impression)

## Culturally sensitive design

The design process involved consulting with a wide range of stakeholders including staff, local Aboriginal community and people who have lived experience of mental health, their family members and carers.

A feature of the design is the way it incorporates the culture and values of the Kamilaroi and Gomerioi people. The design is based on the key themes of Connection to Sky, Cultural Care and Country as Healing.

The NSW Government is committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people through active engagement to design and deliver culturally appropriate and welcoming health facilities.

The project team has actively listened to our community by incorporating feedback in the design to ensure the facility provides a unique connection to the local community and culture.



Adolescent dining and lounge area. (Artist's impression)

The Connection to Sky theme is demonstrated through the tones and colours of sunrise and sunset used throughout the building. Windows provide views of the mountains beyond and their connection to the skyline.

This creates a sense of place and enables people to know where they are on Country.

Openness is created by spaces open to sky and large windows.

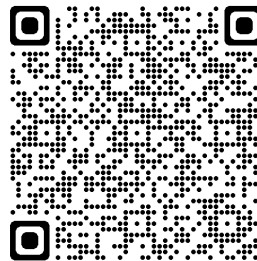
Different colours on the façade pay respect to the three rivers surrounding Tamworth, representing movement, flow and change. Colours used throughout the building reflect seasonal changes as expressed in the landscape, from droughts and dry creek beds to floods with gushing rivers and lush landscapes.

Wayfinding and signage use soft shapes and light colours to create a sense of calm. Wood grain signs complement the architectural design and give the feeling of nature within the building.

Artwork on the floor provides culturally sensitive support for the Aboriginal community to move easily around the building.



Adult dining and lounge area. (Artist's impression)



## Keep up with construction activity

You can keep up with construction activity related to this project, and how it may affect you, by visiting our interactive map. Simply scan this QR code.



Adult dining area. (Artist's impression)