

August 2023

A new mental health unit for Tamworth

What is the current status of this project?

Detailed designs were finalised in July 2023 for the new mental health unit at Tamworth Hospital, showcasing expanded facilities designed to support the recovery and wellbeing of adults and young people in need of mental health care.

Early works started in April 2023 to create extra car parking spaces across the campus and will be complete by the end of August.

Main construction work is planned to commence in late 2023 and be complete by 2025.

Why is the new unit needed?

The new unit will replace the existing Banksia Mental Health Unit, providing welcoming, comfortable, safe and supportive facilities, as well as bring a much-needed expansion of services to the area.

The project is part of the NSW Government's \$700 million Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program, an initiative designed to support the delivery of mental health care reform across the state. The NSW Government announced in June 2022 an additional \$14.6 million for the project to include facilities for adolescents and young people.

What's included in the updated design?

All the existing services found in the Banksia Mental Health Unit will be provided by the new unit, a modern and contemporary facility physically connected to the Tamworth Hospital Emergency Department.

The updated concept plans include new child and adolescent community mental health facilities and additional adolescent inpatient beds to ensure young people who need care can stay closer to home.

This is in addition to the adult and older persons' facilities previously planned. Adding services for young people provides a unique opportunity to further improve the consumer experience and positive outcomes.

The new facility will feature:

- Child and Adolescent Community Mental Health Services
- Additional adolescent inpatient beds (4)
- 20-bed adult pod, as well as 5-bed adult high acuity zone
- 8-bed older persons' area

Will there be an increase in beds?

Yes. There will be a total of 37 beds in the new mental health unit, 12 more than in the Banksia facility (four adolescent, 20 adult, five high acuity and eight older persons).

How will the child and adolescent community mental health services and adolescent beds be accommodated as part of the new design?

In addition to the adult and older persons' facilities previously planned, the design has been expanded to include additional services in child and adolescent community mental health and extra adolescent inpatient beds. This will create 37 beds in total, 12 more than in the existing Banksia Mental Health Unit.

After extensive clinical design and consultation, it was determined that all inpatient beds should be co-located on a single floor on Level 2 to achieve desired Models of Care. This resulted in the design of the Child and Adolescent Community Mental Health Service on Level 1.

Will there be 24-hour access to the unit?

Yes, the unit will continue to operate 24 hours per day.

Who has been involved in designing the facility?

People with lived experience of mental illness have been involved in co-designing the new Banksia Unit. Throughout the project, the project team has been consulting with key staff, carers and consumers with an existing connection to the services, as well as other staff, clinicians and the general community.

The consultation ensures the views of all stakeholders are well represented.

What will happen to the current facilities?

The existing Banksia Unit will be retained and re-purposed for another use.

How can I have my say about this project?

If you would like to provide feedback on this project, either speak to a member of the project team or email HI-Banksia@health.nsw.gov.au.

More information on the project can be found at <https://www.hneinfra.health.nsw.gov.au/projects/banksia>.