

DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CITIES

1.06 EVENT BRIEF - Norfolk Island Health and Residential Aged Care Services (NIHRACS)

Date and Time:	Tuesday 13 November 2018, 1.00 pm – 2.00 pm
Location:	NIHRACS
Meeting with:	Ms Kath Boman, Manager, NIHRACS
Attendees:	Eric Hutchinson, Administrator Kath Bowman, NIHRACS Manager Mayor Robin Adams Meeting participants TBA

Outcomes Sought:

- You will be provided with a tour of the NIHRACS facility by the NIHRACS Manager, during which you will have an opportunity to discuss the changes to the facility since the reform process started.
- An open discussion will be held between the Mayor, community individuals and group representatives involved in the previous plan for a new health facility. The meeting will provide the opportunity for you to hear community views and advise on the commencement of the Norfolk Island Multipurpose Health Service Facility Project.

Key Issues:

- The 2018-19 Budget which includes \$6.3 million over four years to support improvements to the delivery of local health and community services. This funding includes a telehealth service, enhancing palliative care services through a part time palliative care nurse, greater access to mental health services and professional training for St John Ambulance volunteers.
- This funding also includes \$1.2 million for the preparation of a business case for a new Multipurpose Health Service Facility (MPS). The business case will be completed by the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities, Territories Capital and Major Projects Team. The previous Minister announced this funding during his visit.
- The objective of the Project is to construct a replacement Multipurpose Health Service MPS, which is capable of meeting the community health, aged care and allied health service needs of Norfolk Island to a standard of other similar sized communities on the mainland. Stage one of the Project will involve engaging a provider to consult with stakeholders to update the 2015 Norfolk Island Health Services Plan (the Plan). The updated Plan will inform the design requirements of the new MPS.
- A thorough consultation process will allow a broad range of stakeholders to provide input into the future health services on the Island. These stakeholders will include community members and community based organisations, health and aged care staff from NSW Government and Norfolk Island, remote health and aged care specialists.
- It is anticipated consultation will commence in early December 2018 with an aim of having the Draft Health Services Plan completed in late January 2019 for comment.

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- Stage 2 of the project will involve the development of a detailed design for the new MPS for Government review in line with the 2020-21 Budget process. Stage 2 of the Project is expected to commence in March 2019.
- Hettae Ucklan (Here We All Are) is the primary community fundraising group for a new hospital. To date they have raised \$170,000.

Background:

- NIHRACS was established in 2016 as a multi-purpose service providing acute care including emergency services, residential aged care, as well as primary and community care services.
- There are a number of specialists that currently visit NIHRACS including a Psychiatrist, Orthopaedic surgeon, Cardiologist, Endocrinologist, Orthodontist, Urologist, Geriatrician, and Sonographer. Additional positions including a Social Worker and Diversional Therapist have been employed to strengthen the care available to Norfolk Island patients and aged care residents.
- NIHRACS is funded by the Commonwealth and works in partnership with South Eastern Sydney Local Health District to improve patient experience, increase consultation liaison services, support the delivery of outreach health services and provide training and development opportunities.
- The Norfolk Island Community and Clinical Consultative Committee includes two local community members who advise how to best work with the community to ensure decisions, investments, and innovations are person centred, efficient, locally relevant and aligned to local care experiences and expectations.
- The NIHRACS building was constructed in 1947 and has been improved and extended since that time. Today it has 24 beds and includes general medical care, as well as x-ray, pathology, dental clinic, nursing home care and seniors living.
- Numerous reports have identified the existing health facility is overdue for replacement and inadequate to deal with Norfolk Island's ageing population. It is also well below the standards required by state-level health providers to deliver contemporary community healthy and aged care services, or to recruit and retain skilled health professionals.

Sensitivities:

- Stakeholder expectations will need to be clearly managed when discussing the new MPS Project. The Mayor recently wrote to you outlining the Council's proposal for Norfolk Island to be 'A Centre for Health and Wellbeing in the Pacific'. The proposal suggests building a 'state of the art New Age Hospital' on the island, including a modern operating theatre, maternity services, surgeons and anaesthetists. These services are not provided under an MPS model and it is highly unlikely they will be provided in the new facility.
- The Mayor may push to re-establish the maternity ward (Key Issues Brief 2.11) and operating theatre. No commitment should be made to this.

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- Since 1 July 2016, the Commonwealth has invested approximately \$2.5 million in improving the NIHRACS building and standards. Even with the continuation of the capital works program the facility remains substandard compared to mainland standards.
- The recent Chris Nobbs report ‘Norfolk Island’s Major Problem is DIRDC’ (Key Issues Brief 2.04) makes reference to re-establishing NIHRACS as a hospital and re-opening the theatre.
- Part of the challenge in maintaining an operating theatre in a remote location is attracting and retaining doctors who are qualified to perform surgery and have enough opportunity to practice their skills and maintain their registration. This is a challenge in many regional and remote Australian communities.
- In 2015, the previous Norfolk Island Government decided to close the operating theatre at the then Norfolk Island Hospital Enterprise (the now NIHRACS), following an accreditation survey undertaken by The Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS) on NIHE. The accreditation survey recommended that some services, including surgery, cease immediately.
- Since the Australian Government took responsibility for delivering health services on Norfolk Island on 1 July 2016, addressing the recommendations of the accreditation survey and delivering services in accordance with modern Australian healthcare safety standards has been the highest priority.
- Norfolk Island is not alone in facing challenges with the delivery of modern health services and many remote locations rely on medical evacuations. Medical evacuations and health services on Norfolk Island are funded by the Australian Government.
- The introduction of the Norfolk Island Patients’ Travel Accommodation and Assistance Scheme (NIPTAAS) ensures Norfolk Island residents can travel to the mainland to access specialist medical or surgical treatment. NIPTAAS will cover the cost of the flight to the mainland to see a specialist and provides subsidies for accommodation and travel while seeking medical treatment.

Background:

