

Question on Notice
No. 283
Asked on 22 March 2011

MR LAWLOR asked the Minister for Health (MR WILSON)-

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise on the progress of the Gold Coast University Hospital which is being constructed in the electorate of Southport?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Southport for his question.

The new \$1.76 billion Gold Coast University Hospital in your Southport electorate is both on time and on budget for completion in December, 2012.

I have recently visited this site and the progress is extremely impressive.

The number of construction workers on site now exceeds 1,400 with the overall additional jobs created as a result of this project nearing 10,000. The project has no doubt provided a major boost to the economy for the Gold Coast and their construction industry.

Construction of the main Clinical Services building has progressed to the final level and the building structure is due for completion by end of May this year.

The Clinical Services building will incorporate operating theatres, medical imaging and other key clinical support areas; with two inpatient ward blocks connecting to the western and southern sides of the main clinical building.

The Pathology and Education building is on track for completion around December this year and will be the first hospital building to be commissioned.

The Griffith University's new Centre for Medicine and Oral Health has commenced construction on the corner of Olsen Avenue and Parklands Drive, directly across from the Pathology and Education building to encourage connectivity between the two sites.

Construction of the Mental Health building is also progressing quickly, with its main structure on schedule for completion in late April 2011.

The first carpark will commence construction in August this year. An additional carpark has been incorporated into the design of the site as a future initiative and will be triggered by demand.

Works on the Gold Coast Rapid Transit's 'University Station' are progressing well, with break through of the tunnel expected within the next few months.

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The focus on the hospital is beginning to shift from construction of the buildings to the services and opportunities the new hospital will avail to the Gold Coast community; patients, visitors, staff and students alike.

Once complete, the 750 bed specialist hospital will allow over 90% of public health care needs of Gold Coasters to be delivered right here on the Gold Coast.

Early preparations for the transition from the existing Gold Coast Hospital can be seen in the newly completed Neonatal Prototype rooms. Set up in the existing Gold Coast Hospital to prepare and train staff for operating the service, the unit cared for its very first tiny patient in February this year.

Neonatal Intensive Care is just one of five new services that will be made available on the Gold Coast thanks to the expanded facilities at the Gold Coast University Hospital.

Other new services that locals will no longer need to travel to Brisbane for include cancer radiotherapy, neuroscience, trauma response and cardiac surgery.

Increasing staff numbers from the existing Gold Coast Hospital by around 70%, the Gold Coast University Hospital will employ approximately 5000 staff.

This will provide opportunities for the next generation of health care professionals to stay and work on the Gold Coast upon completion of their studies, in a world class facility that offers further education in specialist areas and capacity to conduct medical research.

In preparation for future recruitment requirements of healthcare professionals, our University partners have begun to increase their intake of medical and nursing students.

As an important part of transition preparations, tours of the site have commenced for Gold Coast Health Service District staff to familiarise workers with what will be their new home.

These tours include a look at all buildings, main entrances, car parks, the GCRT station, the future location of Griffith University's Centre for Medicine and Oral Health, and the site for the private hospital.

As part of over \$2 billion being invested in health infrastructure on the Gold Coast by the Queensland Government, the hospital is progressing well. Upon its completion, we look forward to offering the people of the Gold Coast a wider range of local public health services than ever before.