

8 August 2008

Tweed Hospital beds empty three weeks after official Labor opening

The new 30-bed ward at the Tweed Hospital is yet to welcome a single patient three weeks after it was officially opened by the State Labor Government, Tweed Nationals MP Geoff Provest revealed today.

“The NSW Health Minister Reba Meagher proudly declared the ward open during a media stunt at the Tweed Hospital on 15 July, but no funding has been made available since to employ sufficient staff to open the beds,” Mr Provest said.

“At the time, the North Coast Area Health Service promised staff would be employed from 28 July, but as usual nothing has happened.”

“With patients crammed in corridors and the hospital on regular bypass to Queensland Ambulances, this ward, which was initially supposed to open last November, is desperately needed,” Mr Provest said.

Patients continue to sit out in the cold conditions outside the cramped Outpatients Department, while the Hospital awaits funding in order to complete the new Outpatients Department remains half complete.

“The State Labor Government must release the funding immediately and also get back to work on planning the future of the hospital.”

“Morris Iemma now has no further plan to further develop the hospital despite our growing population and the desperate need for specialised services including radiotherapy for cancer patients and interventional cardiology.”

“Labor is not just letting down local patients, but also the staff at the hospital who are doing an amazing job for the Tweed, despite the desperate shortage of resources,” Mr Provest concluded.