

Monday 9 November 2020

## Nepean Hospital celebrates NAIDOC Week with colourful new Darug signage

Aboriginal wayfinding signage for the new clinical tower at Nepean Hospital was unveiled today in celebration of NAIDOC Week.

The signs, which feature Darug language and artwork with English explanations, were developed as part of the \$1 billion Nepean Redevelopment, and will be installed at the entry points of departments such as the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and Emergency Department.

The signs were unveiled by the Nepean Blue Mountains Aboriginal Health Unit during a staff and community NAIDOC event in front of the Stage 1 redevelopment. The event was attended by Nepean Blue Mountains Chief Executive, Kay Hyman, Nepean Hospital General Manager, Brett Williams and Health Infrastructure Senior Project Director, Adrian Timp.

Mrs. Hyman said the new signs will help make the Nepean Hospital a more welcoming and culturally appropriate place for Aboriginal people.

“We are extremely grateful to everyone who contributed to this important signage project. These colourful and engaging signs will help us to recognise and appreciate the unique language of the Darug nation, which is the land that Nepean Hospital is built on,” said Mrs. Hyman.

Local Darug artist, Leanne Watson, who performed a Welcome to Country at the event today, is excited to be part of the project. Her artwork “Daruga Healing” was chosen by staff and the community to be featured in the design of the new signs.

“My painting is about healing on country and I hope when people see the signs they feel safe and calm, knowing the hospital will do its best to look after them and their family,” said Ms. Watson.

Erin Wilkins, from Darug Custodian Aboriginal Corporation and Yanmala Cultural Education, was instrumental in bringing the Darug community together to translate the hospital services into Darug language. Erin believes the signage project is an important way of reclaiming and celebrating the Darug Language.

“The new signs at Nepean Hospital will help to ensure the Darug language continues to be passed down from generation to generation and enable us to strengthen our unbroken culture.

“We all worked very hard together and I am looking forward to seeing the Darug signs up in the hospital soon,” said Ms. Wilkins.

Planning is already underway to incorporate the Darug signage into Stage 2 of the redevelopment and other key areas of the hospital.

The Stage 1 tower is scheduled to open in 2022 and will be followed by Stage 2 construction.

**Ends**