



18 September 2007

## **HOSPITAL FOR WESTERN LAKE MACQUARIE**

The people of western Lake Macquarie at last have a strong elected advocate for a public hospital at Morisset with Greg Piper, Member for Lake Macquarie, calling a public meeting for 7pm on Sunday the 23<sup>rd</sup> at Morisset Primary School.

“The need for a local general hospital has been raised by the community for decades. With a growing population and no result it’s time for concerted action. It’s just not reasonable that our young and elderly are forced to travel to Wyong or John Hunter hospitals”, Mr Piper said.

Mr Piper is aware of the acute doctor shortage and is advocating a model which would start with 15 beds and be staffed through GP access. The proposed facility would offer services such as Outpatients with Chemotherapy and Dialysis, X-ray, Pathology, Physiotherapy, Dental, Mental Health and Midwifery clinics.

“We’ve got to start with an achievable goal but plan for the long term and to that end I’ve investigated sites close to Morisset township that have the space to develop into a fully fledged public hospital as population increases”, Mr Piper said.

According to Mr Piper, the elderly in particular need a local facility where they can be observed by a GP over a 48-hour period following a health scare without being relegated to the corridors of an overcrowded John Hunter.

“In my election campaign I highlighted our miserable \$458 per head State health funding compared to Sydney’s \$880. Since then the public, led by John Quinlan of Sunshine Progress Association, has taken up the issue magnificently and we expect a good roll-up at Sunday’s meeting”, Mr Piper said.