



23 September 2007

PUBLIC MEETING SUPPORTS HOSPITAL

A public meeting tonight at Morisset showed how much the Westlakes community wants a hospital.

Greg Piper, Member for Lake Macquarie, called the public meeting at which was attended by over 150 people.

Mr Piper outlined plans for the hospital, which would start with 15 beds and a range of services and then grow as the population increases.

"The meeting made it clear that the Morisset community wants this hospital" Mr Piper said. "Current services are inadequate and a growing demand exists"

"There are a number of opportunities to locate a hospital, including land that is a walkable distance to the Morisset township and rail station. Another obvious possibility that seems very popular is on the same land occupied by the Morisset Psychiatric Hospital. This land is already owned by the government and has water, sewer, power and even gas available already. Making use of this site would help to integrate the Mental Health Service with other facilities and would be a fabulous opportunity to improve the service including residential accommodation for mental health patients."

"We have the land, we have the population, we have the need - now we need the Government to come on board", Mr Piper said.

The meeting unanimously resolved that "... the State Government recognizes the medical needs of the substantial existing and planned population of western and southern Lake Macquarie and takes immediate steps towards the planning and establishment of a public community hospital in Morisset."

Other speakers supporting a public hospital for Morisset were:

- John Quinlan of Sunshine Progress Association
- Rosmairi Okeno of Southlakes Business Chamber and Community Alliance
- Bob Jaye of the Morisset Senior Citizens and Combined Pensioners Association
- Kristen Stone, a Westlakes resident who spoke of recent difficulties and delays accessing treatment for her sick child.

Sunshine Progress Association has begun a community petition calling for the new hospital.

The meeting was held at Morisset Public School in Terrigal St.