OFFICIAL OPENING OF $300,000 HOSPITAL EXTENSIONS APRIL 22

The new $300,000 four-storey building at Gosford District Hospital to house 30 nurses and the Nurses' Training School has been completed and is now in use.

The new building will be officially opened on Saturday, April 22, by Mr. E. H. Humphries, MLA for Gosford.

Hospital Chief Executive Officer, Mr. N. Boyce, said the public was invited to attend the official opening and inspect the new buildings.

The New Nurses' Training School is on the lower floor, and there are ten nurses' bedrooms on each of the remaining three floors, Mr. Boyce said.

The new home was planned so that it could be readily extended in the future to accommodate up to 100 nurses when the hospital is further developed.

Meanwhile, the renovation programme for the older section of the Hospital is also completed, and it is expected to be fully occupied in the next few weeks.

The new blood bank and pathology and physiotherapy units, which are now in operation.

The renovations in this area include the complete electrical re-wiring of the hospital to enable installation of overbed and night lighting and a radio system which gives patients a choice of three programmes.

All beds have a built-in cubicule screening system for privacy.

A steam-heated radiator system has been installed to ensure patient comfort in colder months.

All the older section of the hospital has been re-painted, and fly screens have been fitted throughout.

The children's ward has been doubled in size, and will accommodate 20 patients.

Local building contractors, Beattie and Frost built the new nurses' home.

INCREASED DEMAND

There has been a big increase in demand for services at Gosford District Hospital in the past six months.

This is shown in figures released by Mr. Boyce.

Mr. Boyce said that the daily average number of patients receiving treatment at the Hospital for the six months period was 94.

This compared with an average of 74 up to June 1966.

Mr. Boyce said that the Hospital was able to give this extra service because it had been doubled in size, from a 65-bed capacity to 135 beds.

This changeover had been going on gradually over the past few months, and the hospital would be in full operation as a 135 bed unit by the end of April.

"We are finding that a number of patients who had formerly to go to Newcastle and Sydney to seek treatment, can now be accommodated at Gosford. This, together with the increase in equipment and essential departments at the hospital, enables us to give a very good service to the sick and injured", he said.

The hospital recorded a total of 23,625 patient-beds during the year ended June, 1966.

Last year's figure could be increased by almost 50 per cent this year.

Mr. Boyce said that it took more money to run the hospital than previously, because of its greater capacity, but returns from patients' fees and Commonwealth subsidies were greater.

Total cost of operating the hospital for the year to June last was $412,288 (compared with $253,378 for the half-year to December, 1966).

Salaries were $247,010 ($171,587) and fees charged were $146,657 ($106,151).