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PREMIER UNVEILS ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL PLANS

Victoria's new Royal Children's Hospital will be a major landmark combining world class health facilities and family-friendly features with an iconic design, Premier John Brumby said today.

Unveiling the plans for the new hospital, Mr Brumby said the new Royal Children's Hospital would boost bed numbers by 46 to 353, with capacity to treat an extra 35,000 patients a year.

"The new Royal Children's Hospital will provide state-of-the-art healthcare to Victorian children, while also catering for their families," Mr Brumby said.

"A child's illness can place a lot of stress on a family. This new redevelopment will ensure Victorian children receive the best possible care and their families are supported.

"The existing Royal Children's delivers among the best paediatric services in the world, and the time has come to give it a home to match the level of medical skill and commitment of its staff."

Mr Brumby said that one of the key family-friendly features of the new Royal Children's Hospital was the fact that 85 per cent of the rooms would be single rooms.

"Children in the single rooms will each have a state-of-the-art entertainment system, while parents will be able to stay with them and use a pull-out bed, storage and internet access," he said.

"The new hospital will also provide an expanded childcare service to help families cope with the stress of illness and treatment."

Mr Brumby announced that under *Partnerships Victoria*, the Children's Health Partnership consortium would build and maintain the hospital, and provide to Victorian taxpayers, at no extra cost, a significant range of extra services and facilities to benefit sick children and their families.

"As part of the redevelopment, the consortium will fund and deliver a 90-room 3.5 star hotel, expanded food shops, a small supermarket and a gymnasium," Mr Brumby said.

"It will also build expanded research facilities for Murdoch Children's Research Institute and the University of Melbourne at their cost. These additions take the total construction project to approximately \$1 billion.

"Under *Partnerships Victoria*, Children's Health Partnership will not only build the new facilities, it will also maintain the hospital over the life of the contract."

The Government will release final contract details following financial close, in accordance with the new Victorian Government disclosure policy.

Health Minister Daniel Andrews said the hospital design acknowledged the importance of family in a child's recovery.

"Sick children and their families will benefit from a family-centred design which features 85 per cent single bed rooms, providing more privacy and improved infection control without compromising the level of care," Mr Andrews said.

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The new hospital will be built on Flemington Road in Parkville, immediately to the west of the existing site. Surrounded by parkland, it will integrate with Royal Park, creating a unique setting for sick children.

“Courtyards and gardens will provide children and families with easy access to the park and a ‘Grand Court’ will provide a natural amphitheatre space for entertainment,” Mr Andrews said.

“The building’s façade has been designed to complement the park environment. There will also be no net loss of parkland at the project’s completion.”

Mr Andrews said the new hospital aimed to achieve 5 Star Green Star status with a range of green features, including a black water treatment plant, rainwater collection and efficient lighting, heating and cooling systems.

Once the new hospital is built, existing buildings will be demolished and the site restored as parkland, providing a new gateway to Royal Park and resulting in no net loss of parkland.

The Children’s Health Partnership consortium, comprising Babcock & Brown as sponsors, Bovis Lend Lease as builder, Spotless Group as facilities manager and architects Billard Leece, Bates Smart and HKS (US), will design, build, finance and maintain the new facility for a 25 year period, under the State Government’s *Partnerships Victoria* model.

Work to construct the new hospital will commence immediately and will be completed in 2011.