

Oncology site is here

by Kietley Isrin

THE old Hawkesbury Hospital site in Windsor has been announced as the new location for the Len and Margaret Peel Oncology and Infusion unit.

According to Group CEO of Hawkesbury Living, Kimberley Talbot, the services could be up and running by December this year.

The letter of offer to lease the historical premises for 10 years was approved at Hawkesbury Council last Tuesday with the first set of health plans to be approved by the end of this week.

Ms Talbot told the *Gazette* Hawkesbury Living Cancer Trust's Board of Trustees had been in negotiations with council for some time and looking at the old hospital site as a possible place to establish Hawkesbury's most advanced cancer treatment facility, following the government's proposal to locate it near the new Hawkesbury Hospital. It had previously been planned to put it in a new building which would have fronted on to March Street in Richmond on the same site as the nursing home.

"Basically this means there will always be a specialist on site and we shouldn't have problem getting government funding for the locals in the future," Ms Talbot said.

"Having worked with local health professionals and strategically looking at how we can come to terms with what the government wants, we came up with the old hospital site and the fact that it had been empty for so long. It's now been approved and will go ahead."

At this stage Ms Talbot said the ground floor will be the Len and Margaret Peel Oncology and Infusion unit and the top floor will be a relocation of specialist services to complement and help run the centre.

Tenders for the oncology services and pathology will be called in the coming months.



The old Hawkesbury Hospital site in Windsor will be the new location for the Len and Margaret Peel Oncology and Infusion unit.

"We will also be running a pharmacy from the site, all of which will be complementary to the hospital," Ms Talbot said.

Ms Talbot said securing a permanent location for the Breastscreen van was also on the agenda.

"We will be approaching Catholic Health about the possibility of offering a permanent location for the Breastscreen van. This will make it a real medical hub. We have also negotiated carparking under the library."

Ms Talbot said the Board of Trustees was currently looking at what other options can go on the original Magnolia Place site on March Street.

"Richmond Club board have been in a quandary over the 11 people who would have become homeless on that site if the original

plans had gone ahead," she said.

"We're still working with government on social housing but in the meantime it allows us more time to work on that issue and open the oncology so people can actually see where the fundraising is going because none of this would have been possible without the fabulous donations. No matter how big or how small, every bit has counted."

According to Hawkesbury Council's director of support services, Laurie Mifsud, council resolved to enter into a new lease with Hawkesbury Living Pty Limited to use the former Hawkesbury Hospital building, the adjacent Johnson Wing building and associated parking and car spaces.

"The permitted use of the premises is for an oncology unit and medical suites," he said.

Radio resignation

by Maryann Jenkins

RAY Medina, a director of the Board of Hawkesbury Radio, is resigning from his position on the cooperative citing a raft of reasons, including the Board providing misleading information to the Australian Communication and Media Authority (ACMA) to keep its license.

Mr Medina, a director for nearly two years, tendered his resignation on Friday, June 29.

In his letter, Mr Medina said he was no longer prepared to remain on a Board that was "clearly in breach of its governance responsibilities and potentially subject to very severe penalties".

Reasons he cited included:

- misuse of the Privacy Act to the detriment of members;
- obstruction of access to the members register, concealment of members' contact details and membership anomalies;
- the Board's refusal to handle membership queries and complaints including accounts queries;
- the Board's refusal to entertain new programming proposals;
- AGM irregularities, misleading statements by the chairman;
- threats of violence against a member.

It's not the first time Mr Medina has spoken out over his suspicions. Earlier this year he publicly backed calls from Cr Bart Bassett to launch an independent audit into the station's memberships numbers.

Chairperson Paul Rasmussen confirmed Mr Medina had tendered his resignation and said the allegations raised were nothing new.

"We have no case to answer, every issue has either been dealt with by the ACMA or handled by the Department of Fair Trading," Mr Rasmussen said.

"We have been investigated and it was found there was no breach of license. If we have committed offences why haven't any charges been laid?"

Mr Rasmussen, said the station's reputation was suffering from "false accusations" being thrown around "like mud".

"We want this station clean, open, transparent and democratic and the last thing we want to be involved in is something shady," he said.

Mr Medina's resignation will be tabled at next week's meeting of the board. He is still a current member and will continue as a presenter at the station.

We have more women and 30-somethings

by Kietley Isrin

THE Hawkesbury is growing, and there's more girl power too. According to the 2011 Census results, Hawkesbury's population has grown in the last five years, but only slightly.

Today, there are 62,353 people living in the Hawkesbury local government area (LGA), compared to 60,561 in 2006 with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) revealing that more than half are women.

And if you think being 30 is too old, then think again. The most-up-to-date information shows the average age of those living in the area is 36.

Hawkesbury City Council's director of city planning, Matthew Owens, told the *Gazette* while there is some small growth from the original 2006 Census count, a full analysis of the data has not been undertaken to date.

"There is still some need for minor adjustments to be made before any meaningful comparison can be undertaken," Mr Owens said.

The ABS has also revealed families make up more than 16,000 of today's population with the average number of children per family is 1.9.

There's a total of 23,365 private dwellings in Hawkesbury LGA and it appears the average weekly household income is \$1385. This means

with the median monthly mortgage repayments at \$2029, households are left with about \$3511 a month, not including general expenses. The average weekly rent is \$280.

Meanwhile, the second most common language spoken at home after English was Maltese, followed by Italian, Macedonian, German and Arabic. The most common ancestries were Australian (32.6 per cent), English (29.5pc), Irish (7.6pc), Scottish (6.3pc) and Maltese (3.1pc).

Mr Owens said the first release of adjusted information will be available on council's website, social atlas and profile page by September 2012.

More details visit <http://abs.gov.au/census>

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