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DATE Wednesday 7 January 2009

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### PAMBULA HOSPITAL HEALTH SERVICES

media release

Greater Southern Area Health Service (GSAHS) has advised that progress is being made across a range of health services at Pambula Hospital.

During December two surgical lists were undertaken at Pambula Hospital; medical rosters have been improved to avoid ambulance bypass for critically ill patients; and moves are being made to enable overnight admissions of cardiac and paediatric patients.

South Coast Integrated Services Manager Mr David Jeffery said that a number of patients requiring minor orthopaedic and urological surgery were able to have their operations at Pambula Hospital recently. Doctors and GSAHS staff are discussing ways in which regular surgical lists can be implemented during 2009.

Ambulance bypass for Pambula Hospital will no longer be required with improved rostering of medical staff.

“The doctors have developed a roster that ensures there is a medical practitioner with high level airway management expertise rostered on call at all times. As long as we have that expertise available at Pambula Hospital, there is no need for the Hospital to be placed on Ambulance bypass”, said Mr Jeffery.

Minor renovations are being planned for Pambula Hospital which will enable some cardiac patients to be admitted to the ward.

“We need to install windows into the room adjacent to the nurses’ station so patients with a cardiac monitor can be observed at all times. As soon as that work is complete, we can admit some categories of cardiac patients in line with NSW Health ‘Cardiac Monitoring in Adult Cardiac Patients in Public Hospitals in NSW’ guidelines”, said Mr Jeffery.

Commencement of the work is now dependent upon the availability of tradespeople.

Pambula Hospital has been treating children in the Emergency Department over the Christmas and holiday period, as per the NSW Health ‘Acute Paediatric Clinical Practice Guidelines’. This means that immediate paediatric care can be delivered with children being observed for a short period (four hours) prior to be either being moved to a paediatric unit or discharged but there will be no overnight admissions.

GSAHS, medical practitioners and nurses are currently working through a number of issues to enable children with minor medical conditions to be admitted to Pambula Hospital once the environment and clinical skills of the nursing staff meet the NSW Health ‘Acute Paediatric Clinical Practice Guidelines’.

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Mr Jeffery said that it is important to ensure the care being provided for children meet a minimum set of recognised standards for paediatric care, which means nurses may require additional training in this specialised area of practice. There also needs to be an appropriate physical space in which children can be under direct supervision separate from adult patients.

“We are looking forward to being able to support the admission of children overnight and there is work already underway to achieve this in the coming months”, added Mr Jeffery.

Greater Southern Area Health Service is also pleased that Pambula medical practitioners have agreed to extend their resignation date until the end of March 2009.

media release **ends**