

# Media Release

17 June, 2020

## **\$100 MILLION PRIVATE HOSPITAL SET FOR MELBOURNE'S BOOMING WEST**

Construction is expected to commence on Sunshine's first private hospital early next year.

The first stage of the \$100 million, six-storey medical facility will include a 30 bed medical and surgical ward with four high dependency beds, a 21 bed dedicated private mental health inpatient unit, four operating theatres and an endoscopy suite. The mental health facility will focus on the treatment of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorders including inpatient and outpatient support programs.

Expansion plans for the private hospital envisage a future 120 bed medical and surgical inpatient unit and a further four operating theatres to complement stage one.

Located on Furlong Road, opposite Sunshine Hospital, the new facility will form part of the Sunshine Health, Wellbeing and Education Precinct. Ear-marked by the Victorian State Government as a critical infrastructure project, the precinct will provide much-needed services and support for the fast-growing population in Melbourne's western suburbs.

Investors in Australian Unity's \$2.2 billion Healthcare Property Trust will fund the development which is set to provide in-demand services to a broad range of specialties including orthopaedics, gynaecology, ophthalmology, plastic surgery and ear, nose and throat surgery. The development will also include a broad range of consulting suite options to support the new private hospital.

Chris Smith, General Manager of Healthcare Property at Australian Unity, said there is no other catchment area in Australia with as strong of a case for a new state-of-the-art private hospital, as Melbourne's west.

"There is absolutely no question that we currently have an under-supply of private hospital capacity in the area", Mr Smith said.

"We know that the older population in Western Melbourne is forecast to grow by 153 per cent by 2036, compared with 96 per cent in the rest of the state. We also know that more than a quarter of Western Melbourne's population have private health insurance, and its two

existing private hospitals currently cater to 83,560 privately insured taxpayers per facility.<sup>1</sup>

"This is astonishingly high when we compare this to Western Sydney which has a similar demographic profile, but 15 private hospitals serving 24,616 privately insured taxpayers per private hospital", he said.

"The development will deliver much-needed social infrastructure to the west of Melbourne and will reduce patient travel time and provide the community with greater convenience.

"It's clear Sunshine's new private hospital will play an essential role in job creation as we put in place measures to stimulate the Victorian economy and transition out of COVID lock-downs.

"As the public health system grapples with long waiting lists and increased demand, it is important that Melbourne's West has public and private health systems working together to provide the community with optimal care," Mr Smith said.

Unitas Healthcare, a new private healthcare operator majority-owned by private equity firm Belay Capital, will lease the hospital on a 30-year term once construction is complete in 2023.

Linda Edgerton, CEO of Unitas Healthcare, said the company felt privileged to be contributing to the improvement of healthcare outcomes for Melbourne's west.

"Unitas is very pleased to be partnering with Australian Unity to complete this modern hospital in Melbourne's West, delivering quality healthcare to a growing community", she said.

Construction on the new Sunshine Private Hospital is scheduled to commence before the middle of calendar 2021.

**ENDS**

**Further information:**

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016 Census, data.gov.au

### **About Australian Unity**

Established in 1840, we're Australia's first member-owned wellbeing company, delivering health, wealth and care services. We're committed to real wellbeing for all Australians, and for us, real wellbeing means so much more than physical health. It's about your standard of living and feeling safe in your home. It's your personal relationships and being connected to your community. It's about what you want to achieve in life, while having the security to get out and do what makes you happy.

Being a member-owned company—also called a mutual— means we're owned by our members, not shareholders. That gives us the freedom to invest money back into the services and solutions that matter most to our members, customers and the Australian community. We can also make long-term decisions.

### **About Unitas Healthcare**

Unitas Healthcare is a private healthcare operator with a focus on delivering quality healthcare outcomes through state of the art facilities and processes. Unitas Healthcare is a private company which is majority owned by Belay Capital.

### **About Belay Capital**

Belay Capital is a specialist Australian private equity firm. Belay Capital focuses on providing consistent high quality private equity returns with a collaborative management style which considers all stakeholders.