

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Minister for Crime Prevention
Minister for Corrections
Minister for Youth Justice
Minister for Victim Support



Friday, 8 March 2019

NEW PRISON UNIT COMPLETES HEALTH AND WELLBEING HUB

A new 48-bed unit for women prisoners with complex needs will open at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC) today, completing a Mental Health and Wellbeing Precinct worth more than \$40 million.

Minister for Corrections Ben Carroll officially opened the Rosewood Unit, which comprises 22 outpatient forensic mental health beds and 26 mainstream beds.

The Rosewood Unit is one of two facilities to make up the precinct, with the Marmak Unit opened in October last year. The two units will help improve rehabilitation outcomes for women prisoners at DPFC.

The Marmak Unit provides treatment and support for women with acute mental health needs, while the Rosewood Unit provides for women with complex needs.

Complex needs may include intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, acquired brain injuries and women participating in the Marmak Outpatient Program.

Construction of the Rosewood Unit took 17 months, with more than 200 contractors working on the project. Fifteen new custodial and allied health staff have been employed to work in the unit.

Other features of the building include therapeutic outdoor areas, single cells, as well as much-needed program and interview rooms.

Together the Marmak and Rosewood Units ensure that the Mental Health and Wellbeing Precinct comprises 70 beds—44 of them new and 26 which replaced existing beds in old units. A total of 30 custodial and allied health staff work across the Mental Health and Wellbeing Precinct.

In addition to visiting the newly commissioned Rosewood Unit, Mr Carroll also took part in International Women's Day celebrations at DPFC.

Players from the AFL Women's league visited the prison to speak to female prisoners and conduct a footy clinic.

The players, including Courtney Ugle from Essendon, and Aliasha Newman, Harriet Cordner and Lily Mithen from the Melbourne Football club, spoke about the challenges they have faced on their journey to becoming elite footballers.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Corrections Ben Carroll

"Opening the Rosewood Unit at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre marks a major milestone in the completion of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Precinct – this is about boosting rehabilitation outcomes for women prisoners."

"Thanks to these new facilities, women prisoners will get the mental health treatment and other supports they need to help ensure they are in the best place to make a real go of it when they leave prison."

Quotes attributable to Corrections Commissioner Emma Cassar

"The Rosewood Unit is a vital part the Mental Health and Well Being Precinct at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre and provides a much-needed intermediate level between people with acute mental health needs and those complex needs."

"Hearing other women's success stories has a powerful impact on women in prison. I'm sure that the female prisoners at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre will find today's International Women's Day celebrations especially inspiring."

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