

**CORUMBENE HEALTH HUB ON THE AVENUE  
OFFICIAL OPENING  
SPEECH BY  
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA  
NEW NORFOLK, FRIDAY 10 MAY 2024**

Good morning, everyone, and thank you for joining us for this very important opening of the new Health Hub on the Avenue.

I pay my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal community and recognise their enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea, and waters.

I am very pleased to be here with my husband, Don, and it gives me great pleasure to officially open this Health Hub on the Avenue. This is a fine example of Federal and State governments working together with our community to deliver much-needed services. The redevelopment of the site cost around \$11.5 million. Around 50% was contributed by Corumbene, with the remainder made up of federal and state funding, as well as funding from the University of Tasmania.

Corumbene is a not-for-profit independent aged and community care provider based in New Norfolk. Corumbene has been dedicated to achieving the vision of "every door leading to wellbeing"<sup>1</sup> since the 1960s.

I congratulate Corumbene's staff and executive, who are here today, for making this Health Hub a reality. This opening is another significant step towards their goal to strengthen the health and wellbeing of the Derwent Valley community through quality health and community services.

This Health Hub will serve the community well into the future. There are some 2000 square metres of space, a new roof and windows, and an atrium to join the buildings with common areas for all to enjoy.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://corumbene.org.au/our-mission/> accessed 6 May 24

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare<sup>2</sup>, nearly one in three Australians live in rural or remote regions. These Australians have poorer outcomes than their city counterparts, due to the geographic challenges. They have higher rates of hospitalisation, death and injuries, and poorer access to, and utilisation of, primary health care. These challenges can be overwhelming.

By locating health services in the region, Corumbene and partners provide significant health care benefits. Shorter travel times and greater community access are incentives to take up primary health care options. This can only provide better outcomes.

May I welcome our University of Tasmania's presence at the Hub through their Centre for Rural Health. Rural training opportunities are a priority for the future of our healthcare system. They provide a pathway to careers for medical professionals in rural Tasmania. This new multidisciplinary teaching facility has been developed in partnership with Corumbene Care. Nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists and other allied health students may now undertake their professional placements here and live in the region.<sup>3</sup>

May I also congratulate the other foundation partners and tenants of the Health Hub. Your services will make an important contribution to this community. I extend my best wishes for success to Hobart Pathology, Next Level Wellness and Recovery Centre, Eve & Co Coffee House, as well as Corumbene's own Rural and Primary Health program and Business Excellence teams.

May I add on a personal note that I am particularly pleased to see buildings that are part of the Willow Court precinct being redeveloped. These buildings date back to the 1930s, so this restoration work is an important contribution to the historic heritage of New Norfolk. It is significant to see the transformation from the old and delapidated buildings to the outstanding facilities we see today. We visited here last June so we can appreciate the huge progress made to complete the development.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/rural-remote-australians/rural-and-remote-health> accessed 6 May 24

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.utas.edu.au/about/news-and-stories/articles/2022/new-facility-to-help-support-current-and-future-rural-aged-care-workforce-in-southern-tasmania> accessed 6 May 24

I am sure the Derwent Valley community will not only appreciate these facilities in this location, but also the economic and social benefits to New Norfolk and its surrounding region.

It is now my great honour and pleasure to officially declare open the Health Hub on the Avenue.

Thank you.