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Clarke on board to bat for Liverpool

Australian Cricket Captain and local hero Michael Clarke has been named an ambassador of the South Western Sydney Cancer Wellness Centres, to be built at Liverpool and Camden.

The Wellness Centres will support patients, cancer survivors and their families with information, advice, psychological support and tailored programs following cancer diagnosis and treatment.

South West Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) made the announcement today, World Cancer Day (4 February).

Clarke said he was pleased to be part of the project.

"It is a pleasure to come on board as an Ambassador for the South Western Sydney Cancer Wellness Centres based in Liverpool and Camden," he said.

"Like many Australians, I have family and friends who have been touched by cancer. Facilities such as these are vital in ensuring their cancer journey is as comfortable as possible.

"As a Liverpool boy I am also thrilled that this centre will be added to the health resources of south western Sydney."

Fundraising for the Liverpool centre in Goulburn St is currently underway, with the design phase expected to begin by early next year.

South Western Sydney Local Health District Director of Cancer Services Professor Geoff Delaney said the centres would be built with funds raised through the Dry July campaign and donations by generous community members and local organisations.

"Cancer survivors, and those who have completed treatment, have specific ongoing needs that are best addressed in a comprehensive cancer wellness centre," he said.

"Issues relating to the physical and emotional effects of the cancer and cancer treatment can lead to significant ongoing problems for patients and their carers.

"A purpose-built wellness centre provides a greater focus on additional support services in a more comfortable setting, away from the hospital environment where patients underwent their acute treatment.

"As well as supporting people living with cancer, we hope that this facility will also be responsible for undertaking research to improve understanding of cancer survivorship problems and help to find solutions," Professor Delaney said.

Professor Delaney said the District was extremely grateful for Michael Clarke's support.

"Michael is not only a national sporting star, but he is also a great local hero who is an ideal ambassador for the Wellness Centres.

"We are looking for more local heroes to be a part of the project, by helping in whatever way they can to donate and help make the Centres a reality sooner," he said.

The proposed design for the Liverpool Centre includes:

- Reception and Waiting Area
- Resource Centre
- Kitchen
- Large multi-purpose media rooms
- Gymnasium
- Therapy rooms
- Large clinic/treatment rooms
- Shower/change rooms with disabled access
- Relaxation gardens & outdoor areas

SWSLHD comprises 12 per cent of the residents of New South Wales. The expected number of new cancer diagnoses per year is 5,300. The number of patients surviving their cancer is growing. Currently, approximately 65 per cent of patients will live longer than five years after their cancer diagnosis and the vast proportion of these patients are cured from their cancer.

To donate call 9616 4471 or visit www.swslhd.nsw.gov.au/cancer/support.html