Monday 14 May 2012

**RAPTOR suite helping to save lives**

NSW Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research Jillian Skinner today visited a new state-of-the-art hybrid surgical theatre and interventional radiology suite used to operate on critically ill emergency trauma patients at Liverpool Hospital.

Also known as a RAPTOR (Resuscitation with Angiography, Percutaneous Techniques, and Operative Repair) suite, the room is a unique new concept and is a prototype version of a larger, more ideally suited, RAPTOR suite medical staff are working towards at Liverpool Hospital.

Director of Trauma Services at Liverpool Hospital Dr Scott D’Amours said emergency trauma patients could be extremely unstable and the RAPTOR suite could mean the difference between life and death.

“The RAPTOR suite contains both operating and interventional radiology imaging equipment so unstable patients who are haemorrhaging do not need to be transported to alternate venues for surgery and for interventional radiology,” Dr D’Amours said.

“This saves time which, in emergency trauma patients, can be life saving.

“Essentially the RAPTOR suite is a purpose-built all inclusive space containing high tech imaging equipment as well as a large, state-of the-art operating theatre.

“The suite contains a floating operating table that permits haemorrhage control operative procedures and is light, radiolucent and allows for rotational imaging, providing very detailed scans of other parts of the body.

“This can all be done in one place and prevents risks which arise for a patient when they are transported to different areas of the hospital.

“Instead, this brings the capability of different parts of the hospital directly to the patient where and when they need it most,” he said.

The RAPTOR suite contains imaging equipment which is mounted to a robotic arm similar to one you might see in a high-tech European vehicle manufacturing plant.

The suite is located within the operating theatre and interventional radiology department and adjacent to the intensive care unit, recovery ward, and CT scanner. It is also metres away from the purpose-built, high speed lifts which transport the sickest patients from the resuscitation area of the Emergency Department or the rooftop helipad directly to the RAPTOR suite.

Director of Radiology at Liverpool Hospital Dr Glen Schlaphoff said the RAPTOR concept was a holistic approach to the critically injured patient.

“The suite allows interventional radiologists and surgeons to work on a critically ill patient together, in order to save time in an emergency situation,” said Dr Schlaphoff.

“A robotic arm provides high quality imaging to evaluate and treat internal bleeding that is otherwise nearly impossible to reach by traditional surgical techniques. The arm can also perform a CT-like scan to check for significant brain injury without needing to transfer the patient to another room to undergo a standard CT scan.

“Large screens in the room display the images, allowing doctors to see the extent of the injury to organs and arteries and expedite treatment which can be life saving.
“The imaging devices can be moved into almost any position around a patient, allowing surgeons to better assess their condition and provide more targeted surgical treatment.

“This is extremely beneficial for doctors treating trauma patients who can have multiple, serious injuries,” he said.

Liverpool Hospital General Manager Mr Anthony Schembri said the suit was a reflection of the advanced technology and technique employed at the Hospital.

“Liverpool Hospital’s $390million redevelopment has allowed us to utilise the latest technology, equipment and design to provide high quality health care to south western Sydney,” Mr Schembri said.

“Liverpool is one of the busiest trauma Hospitals in the state and is set to get busier as the population grows, so technology such as this is vital to help us keep up with demand.

“As well as emergency trauma cases, the RAPTOR suite is also used daily for complicated elective surgery procedures involving endovascular work, where imaging during surgery is beneficial,” he said.