

Date: 5 September 2017

## Zen garden helps recovery grow

A new Zen garden has transformed the outdoor space at Birunji Youth Mental Health Unit into an area of beauty to support the mental health recovery of young patients.

Thanks to a community project from Beautiful Minds, the garden was designed to integrate wellbeing and clinical care.

Beautiful Minds President, Sandra McDonald said it offers patients a place of peace and tranquillity for mindful reflection and relaxation during their mental health recovery.

“The Zen garden provides a quiet space for contemplation, allowing young minds a place of beauty and sanctuary to rest and heal,” said Ms McDonald.

The Zen garden includes a water feature, a range of plants that appeal to the senses, a Japanese rock garden, music, a koi fish and Japanese cherry blossom mural and outdoor furniture for patients to relax and mindfully enjoy the surrounds.

Director of Mental Health, Dr Claire Jones said, “We are incredibly grateful for the support of Beautiful Minds. Their efforts have transformed the outdoor space at Birunji into a lovely garden that is sure to have a positive impact on patient wellbeing.”

“Spending time outdoors, or in a garden like the Zen garden, is known to have a range of psychological benefits, including improving mood and lowering levels of stress, anxiety and depression,” said Ms Jones.

Ms McDonald said creating the Zen garden was a true community effort.

“The landscaping was provided by John Meek Landscaping, the Airs Bradbury Men’s Shed built the wonderful outdoor table and the fantastic mural was prepared by Reiby Juvenile Justice Centre and designed and painted by Campbelltown Performing Arts High School,” Ms McDonald said.

Birunji is an acute 20-bed youth mental health unit at Campbelltown Hospital.