The NSW Government is investing $300 million in the Multipurpose Service (MPS) program. The MPS program provides improved access to health and aged care services in rural and remote areas across the state. MPS facilities tailor healthcare needs for local communities, integrating health, aged care, emergency and urgent care services to provide flexible health care for local communities.

Early planning indicates the MPS project at Tumbarumba is likely to be a new build, along with retention of the existing high care residential aged care building.

The project is proposed to include:

- 24 hour access to first aid and emergency care in an emergency treatment room
- residential aged care beds
- staff accommodation.

Suitability for a Multipurpose Service

Taking into account the health care needs of communities across regional and remote NSW, the key drivers for the development of Multipurpose Services relate to:

Declining or changing populations

Communities best suited for a Multipurpose Service facility have insufficient catchment populations to sustain separate acute hospital, residential care, community health and home care services; generally from around 1,000 to 4,000 persons. The community of Tumbarumba has a population of 1,757 people.

Across NSW the population is expected to increase by over 27% by 2031. Some regional and remote communities, however, are expected to experience minimal population growth, population decline and significant demographic changes over this period of time. The population of the Tumbarumba Local Government Area which includes the community of Tumbarumba is estimated to reduce by over 5% by 2031.

This population is also changing – over this period the percentage of the population aged 70 years and over is expected to grow and will make up an increasingly higher proportion of the total population (22%).

Isolation

Tumbarumba’s nearest neighbouring community health care service is in Tumut, 65 kilometres away, with the closest major regional health service located at Albury.

Socio-economic disadvantage

The Australian Bureau of Statistics produces the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage. The index for NSW has a baseline of 1,000. A score above this indicates socio-economic advantage and a score below this indicates socio-economic disadvantage.
Higher levels of socio-economic disadvantage are associated with an increase in the proportion of the population who are at risk of poor health.

The community of Tumbarumba has a Socio-Economic Index For Areas (SEIFA) score of 918 and is rated in the lowest 16th percentile in NSW.

**Disease burden**

The NSW Chief Health Officer’s Report 2010 identifies that people living in rural and remote areas have poorer health generally than those living in metropolitan areas.

**Priority to improve Aboriginal Health**

In Tumbarumba, 1.9% of the local population identify as Aboriginal (compared with 2.5% across NSW).

The Chief Health Officer’s Report 2012 highlights the need for continued investment in health services and the barriers faced by Aboriginal people.

**Existing infrastructure**

There is a significant proportion of infrastructure in regional and remote communities which is old, functionally constrained, not able to respond to new and contemporary models of care, and which inhibits the potential for service integration and innovation to best meet the health care needs of the community.

**Questions**

Will communities have the opportunity to provide input into their local MPS project?

Yes, project user groups will be established for each Multipurpose Service, and will include representatives from existing health facilities, other health service providers and the community. User Groups will be involved in the consultation and planning process. Local Health Advisory Committees, Local Councils and community members will also be involved in the planning and development phases.

How will communities be kept informed of progress about their local MPS?

Ongoing updates will be provided to local communities via regular communication channels including newsletters, the Multipurpose Service website, announcements in the local media and in person from members of the project teams.

For more information about this MPS project visit:


**Sources:**

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011 Census
NSW Planning and Environment 2014 Population Projections 2033.0.55.001 - Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia, 2011