

# Residents create 'tree of life' mural at Coolah MPS

Building works are continuing on the Coolah Multipurpose Service (MPS) redevelopment project, with the foundations and some of the wall frame structures complete at the two new Residential Aged Care wings.

As part of the redevelopment, some areas of the MPS have been boarded up with timber structures otherwise known as 'construction hoarding' to ensure the safety of residents, patients, staff and visitors. While this has reduced some of the usual views of the gardens for the residents of the MPS, it has also created a sense of excitement about what is happening outside and provided an opportunity for the residents to exercise their creativity.

Working with the recently appointed Activities Coordinator, the residents came up with a unique idea to beautify their surroundings while the redevelopment is occurring.

"One of the residents had joked about wanting to do some graffiti and the idea went from there," said Christine Riley, Activities Coordinator for residents of the Coolah MPS and Coolah Hostel.

A group of approximately 15 of the



residents from the MPS and the Hostel worked together to create a mural on the construction hoarding at the end of the existing Residential Aged Care wing.

"The theme of the mural is the 'tree of life' and it includes the tree made of real paper bark, paintings of leaves, flowers and animals suited to what the residents liked such as a horse, butterflies, birds, chooks and chickens," said Christine.

"We printed pictures of the animals and plants and each resident got to paint their picture in the colours of their choosing, either independently or with some assistance."

Feedback from the residents involved was that it helped to get people talking and working together.

"It has been a great little project, and the residents do enjoy looking at the mural and are proud to show it off to their family and visitors," Christine said.



"To finish the mural, Kevin from Maintenance at the Coolah MPS helped the residents paint the highest parts of the sky, making it a true team effort.

"We're all looking forward to the new facilities the MPS redevelopment will deliver including a dedicated games room, as we are currently sharing the dining room for our activities."

The Coolah MPS redevelopment project is scheduled to be complete in 2018.



## Boost to financial counselling welcomed

Federal Member for Parkes Mark Coultou said farmers in need of financial counselling across the Parkes Electorate are set to benefit, with a \$560,000 funding injection to support people across the Central and Northern NSW regions.

Mr Coultou said the funding is part of a more than \$1.6 million boost across seven Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS) providers to support farmers in hardship.

"We all know how valued the RFCS is for local farmers, giving them free access to professionals to work through their financial situation and build financial self-sufficiency," he said.

"This funding is part of an important funding boost across Rural Financial Counselling Service regions experiencing significant demand.

"It will help ensure farmers in financial hardship can make business decisions and undertake business planning and farm debt mediation to improve their circumstances.

"This service will help support farmers who leave the Farm Household Allowance (FHA) program.

"FHA is a successful program that has helped 7,360 farmers since July 2014. RFCS can provide valuable assistance for farmers who leave FHA and want to continue to improve their circumstances.

"The Coalition Government recognises that tough times can put severe pressure on farmers trying to manage both farm and household budgets.

"More than \$1 billion in rural assistance has been made available since September 2013.

"It's critical the Government gets our assistance measures right so that we're delivering targeted support where it's needed most."

For more information on the RFCS visit [agriculture.gov.au/rfcs](http://agriculture.gov.au/rfcs) or call 1800 686 175.

For more information on government farmer assistance measures, visit <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance>