

# DANDENONG HOSPITAL MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY

## A WHOLISTIC APPROACH TO BUILDING MENTAL HEALTH

Construction of the new Dandenong Hospital Mental Health Facility has been a balancing act. Kane Constructions had to meet the stringent safety and security requirements of a mental health facility, while also delivering a result which has aesthetic qualities conducive to the recovery of equilibrium.

The project's first stage, a new 50 bed Adult Acute Mental Health Facility, had to be constructed on a tight twelve-month timeframe and delivered defect-free, in order to prevent the need for tradesmen to enter the patient environment.

Special construction methods and fittings were used to minimise the potential risks for clients in the facility. These included anti-ligature hinges, door hardware and tapware. Tamper proof fixings were also used throughout the facility, and all the light fittings and air conditioning registers installed throughout are also tamper-proof designs.

"There was a balance between making the facility safe for clients and avoiding an 'institutional feel' to the facility," said Kane Constructions project manager, Gus Geuna.

"There has been extensive use of AFS certified Blackbutt timber, fabric panelling and carpet internally, and synthetic grass, coloured concrete and advanced planting externally, which all contribute to giving the facility a very comfortable and homely feel to assist the users to recuperate."

"For the safety of both the clients and service staff an extensive network of catwalks has been constructed, which provides access to

all air conditioning equipment, cisterns and thermostatic mixing valves from above, rather than having tradesmen entering the patient spaces during servicing and maintenance visits."

The Kane Constructions Environmental Management System is certified to AS/NZS ISO 14001. The company is a member of the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA), with a number of GBCA Accredited Professionals on staff, including Dandenong Hospital Mental Health Redevelopment project manager, Gus Geuna.

On this project, environmental sustainability initiatives included the use of double glazing and low e-glass throughout to minimise heat gain/loss through the glazing. Blinds are located in the interstitial space between the glazing panels, which both protects the blinds from damage, and removes the ligature risk typically associated with blinds in mental health facilities. An energy efficient in-slab heating systems will provide a very steady form of heating, and also a comfortable warmth underfoot for the clients.



**MAIN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY :** Kane Constructions  
**CLIENT :** Department of Human Services / Southern Health  
**COMPLETION :** December 2011  
**PROJECT END VALUE :** \$59 Million  
**ARCHITECT :** Bates Smart Irwin Alsop  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER :** Irwinconsult  
**QUANTITY SURVEYOR :** Davis Langdon

Since 1995, a number of international projects have been undertaken in China, Pakistan, Malaysia and the Pacific including Tonga, Western Samoa, the Solomon Islands and PNG.

Kane commenced operations in Melbourne in 1973 and currently employs 286 staff across offices located in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

The company operates across all sectors of the industry including health, defence, education, retail, residential, commercial and industrial.

Kane undertakes projects ranging in value from \$<1 million up to \$100 million utilising a variety of contract types such as lump sum, design & construction, construction management and managing contractor.

Current projects include the RACV Torquay Resort (\$95 million), Sunshine Hospital (\$56 million), Manningham Civic Precinct (\$32 million) and the 6-star Green Star Victoria University Construction Futures Project (\$35 million).

Kane has recently been awarded three contracts by the Department of Human Services to construct 500 affordable housing units with a total value of \$130 million.

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