The completion and official opening on May 7 of $1,200,000 extensions to the Gosford District Hospital by the Minister for Health, the Hon. A. H. Jago, was a milestone in the history of medical advance on the Central Coast. From modest beginning 24 years ago when the hospital was opened as the result of energetic and public spirited efforts by a group of local people, the hospital now has grown from a small 65-bed institution to one of 130 beds with many essential facilities not previously available.

Sixty-five extra beds double the in-patient capacity, and will ease, but not overcome, the serious shortage of hospital beds in the rapidly growing area.

Outpatient clinics become available for the first time as well as a pathology clinic and a blood bank.

A full-time Medical Superintendent is to be appointed in the next few months and Resident Medical Officers will be attached to the hospital next year on a full-time basis for the first time.

In order for the public to appreciate the magnitude of the project, the new extensions were thrown open to the public on May 7.

Since the first section of the hospital was opened in 1942, a number of small additions have been made. The extension opened on May 7 is the largest of all.

Further development is planned for next year.

It will comprise a four-storey extension to the Nurses' Home for accommodation and a training school at an estimated cost of $400,000.

After that is completed it is planned to build a large ward block to make a base hospital with a total of 250 beds. The last stage of the project is expected to cost $1,000,000.

With the base hospital completed, along with all of the essential back-up services and facilities, it is anticipated that a planned programme will be started to develop regional hospitals at strategic points in the area.

These Hospitals will be established at points where population requires them. Proposed centres are at Woy Woy, Wyong and The Entrance.

Modern hospital serves Entrance

Those living in The Entrance and Long Jetty area have an excellently run private hospital serving them.

The Entrance and Long Jetty District Community Hospital, a medical, surgical and obstetrical hospital has 14 beds in the general section and six maternity beds.

A permanent staff of 12 is headed by Matron M. M. Simpson who has been in charge since the hospital was established in 1958. In addition there are three casual employees.

The hospital is run by a committee of 12 and plans have been approved for the building of a new maternity wing containing eight beds, a labour ward and redesigned ambulance entrance.

The hospital is also to have a new laundry, boiler room and a sewing and mending room with room for linen storage.

Matron Simpson trained at Stob Hill Hospital, Glasgow, a hospital with 2000 beds. She was a gold medallist in her final year before coming to Australia in 1931.

Before taking up her present position, Matron Simpson conducted a hospital at The Entrance North, for 13 years.

New ward block is of the highest standard

Patient accommodation in the new ward block is of the highest standard.

Six-bed, three-bed and one-bed wards are available.

Each bed in the six and three-bed wards is indvidually curtained to ensure the maximum privacy when required. Overbed lighting is provided for each bed as well as a nurse's call system.

A three-station radio earphone system is built in. Piped oxygen is provided for the majority of beds.

Nylon curtains at the windows, sheet vinyl on the floors and the use of light pastel colours complete the decoration of the wards.

Each floor has a solarium for ambulant patients. Comfortable lounge chairs and a coffee table is provided. The area is wired for TV.

Single bed wards have the facilities of other wards with the addition of a telephone. Power outlets are situated to allow fans for all wards.

Central heating is provided for all wards, corridors and sitting rooms.

A ward pantry on each floor allows a centralised food service to operate. Heated food trolleys deliver plated food from the central kitchen to the ward pantry from where an individual tray service operates.