

Rudd commits to health and infrastructure as top priorities PM watching Port City



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Mr Rudd said this would be done under the new National Hospitals Health Network, where allied health and hospitals in the Gladstone and Rockhampton region would be looked after by local people.

"Currently, we have a health system that doesn't talk to itself," he said.

Mr Rudd said it would likely have two or three health experts from Rockhampton, one or two from Gladstone, some management people and some financial, on a board.

"Rule number one is no politicians," he said.

Mr Rudd said on top of that, instead of the majority of funding being distributed by the State Government, it would come directly from the Federal Government to the local boards.

He said the funding would be allocated through a system called Actively Based Funding, which will be set up by an independent national price regulator.

Mr Rudd said part of the problem was sufficient numbers of general practitioners and suffi-

cient flexible after-hours primary health care.

"If there are not sufficient numbers, if there are not sufficient flexible after hours, people are going to emergency departments."

Mr Rudd said primary health care was being funnelled into the acute-care hospital system, costing taxpayers huge amounts. "Hence why we are funding GP Super Clinics," he said.

"We have a health system that doesn't talk to itself."

PM KEVIN RUDD

Mr Rudd will announce further funding for Gladstone's health system this morning, while visiting Gladstone Hospital.

He announced 128 additional clinical training places to boost health services for Gladstone. The places will be for nursing and midwifery, psychology, pharmacy, podiatry and physiotherapy.

For the full interview involving *The Observer* political reporter Kerri-Anne Mesner and Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, visit www.gladstoneobserver.com.au tonight.



OIL TALK: Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in Gladstone yesterday.

Picture: CHRISSY HARRIS rudd080410

Garrett follows Rudd to the north

By LIAM BUTTERWORTH
MORNING BULLETIN

CENTRAL Queensland is politician central at the moment, with Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett trailing behind visits by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd.

Yesterday Mr Garrett flew over the site of the oil spill disaster to get a visual inspection of Sheng Neng 1, which ran aground off Douglas Shoal, east of Rockhampton.

The Chinese ship ran aground on Saturday afternoon, rupturing a fuel tank and spilling oil.

While preparations to begin pumping were mostly ready, Mr Garrett warned the coming days would be critical in the operation to remove the ship from the reef.

"Clearly the next two days are going to be critical given that