



Do you want to know about how we're managing noise, dust & asbestos?

The health and safety of our patients, families, visitors, staff, students and researchers are the top priority for The Children's Hospital at Westmead redevelopment team.

Westmead is one of Australia's busiest health precincts and the important work across healthcare, research and education must be maintained during all construction works.

This fact sheet outlines how The Children's Hospital at Westmead redevelopment team is managing noise, vibration and dust, as well as how we remediate asbestos and prevent and control infection risks during the construction of the new Paediatric Services Building, multi-storey car park, and the refurbishment of existing facilities inside the hospital.

Overarching management and governance

All major construction projects, like The Children's Hospital at Westmead redevelopment, need to comply with strict environmental and planning controls. Potential environmental impacts of construction at Westmead are governed by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). We're taking additional measures to keep our patients, families, visitors, staff, students and researchers safe while we build our new Paediatric Services Building and undertake refurbishments inside the hospital.

The Children's Hospital at Westmead redevelopment team is working closely with the EPA.

The EPA has approved the strategy for environmental management, including for the remediation and management of asbestos at Westmead. The Children's Hospital at Westmead redevelopment team and Sydney Children's Hospitals Network will continue to work closely with the EPA as all remediation works are completed.

Safework NSW has been consulted and is satisfied with controls and practices in place for asbestos management at the hospital.

Dust Management

Reducing dust caused by construction is a key focus at Westmead. A broad range of dust mitigation measures are implemented on site, depending on the nature of the work that is being carried out.

These include:

- Changing the activities that take place during high winds and poor weather conditions
- The use of covers on material stockpiles
- Application of 'dust block' which seals dirt to ensure it doesn't become airborne
- The use of road sweepers along surrounding roads to collect dust and dirt
- The use of hand-held water sprays and construction vehicle water carts
- Daily air monitoring and real time tracking during construction

Infection Control

Infection prevention is one of the key priorities in Australian hospitals. Construction has the potential to impact patient wellbeing.

Each contractor working at The Children's Hospital at Westmead is obligated to manage infection control risks as part of their contract deliverables and their processes are subject to ongoing checks and audits.

Noise and Vibration

The construction sites for the new Paediatric Services Building and multi-storey car park are close to Westmead Hospital and The Children's Hospital at Westmead, patients and staff, and alongside sensitive research and healthcare equipment. The refurbishment program inside The Children's Hospital at Westmead will occur throughout different areas of the hospital, potentially impacting some of our stakeholders within.

The Construction Noise and Vibration Management Sub-Plan sets out the management strategy for The Children's Hospital at Westmead Stage 2 Redevelopment project. This is guided by the NSW Government's Interim Construction Noise Guideline.

Noise and vibration monitors are located in surrounding buildings and connected to a network which provides real-time alarms and monitoring. When set levels are exceeded, the construction management team and appropriate healthcare or research managers are notified and action is taken.

Commonly Asked Questions

What is asbestos?

Asbestos are a group of natural occurring minerals. They were used as a reliable and durable construction material up until the 1980s. Asbestos material possesses strong fibres and is fire resistant, which is why they were used in building materials.

Where is asbestos used?

Asbestos is found in many houses and buildings built before the 1990s, including in roofing, guttering, vinyl flooring, wall sheeting and many other products.

When does asbestos pose a risk?

Asbestos fibres can pose a risk to health if they become airborne, as inhalation is the main way that asbestos enters the body. Small quantities of asbestos fibres are present in the air at all times. Most people are exposed to very small amounts of asbestos as they go about their daily lives and do not develop asbestos-related health problems.

Finding that your home or workplace has asbestos does not mean your health is at risk.

People who have suffered health effects from exposure to asbestos have generally worked in either the asbestos mining or milling industry, worked in industries involved in making or installing asbestos products, or are from the immediate families of these people. In all of these situations there was exposure to high levels of airborne dust, from either the processes involved or from the clothes of the workers. This was before disposable protective clothing requirements and other measures were introduced.

How is asbestos managed at Westmead?

As part of a comprehensive management strategy of asbestos at The Children's Hospital at Westmead, the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network (SCHN) and Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD) have undertaken various Environmental Site Assessments and a site-wide Asbestos Quantification Assessment. There is an Asbestos Management Plan for all health facilities for SCHN and WSLHD.

The Asbestos Management Plan for The Children's Hospital at Westmead Stage 2 Redevelopment documents the procedures and controls required to be implemented during asbestos remediation works. SCHN will control the Long Term Environmental Management Plan for the redeveloped areas once The Children's Hospital at Westmead Stage 2 Redevelopment project has been completed. The comprehensive

management approach follows the Australian legislative and best practice model.

Am I safe to open windows and walk near asbestos works? Yes

All works where asbestos may be present is carried out within exclusion zones.

These exclusion zones will be behind the main construction site fence line that you will walk past or see. With these stringent controls and air monitoring in place, risk is mitigated for people walking past.

The workers within these exclusion zones are qualified professionals, who are experts in asbestos management planning, identification, remediation and disposal. They deal with asbestos remediation works over potentially an extended period of time.

They will be wearing protective clothing, such as respirators, fully disposable coveralls, gloves and footwear which are a regulatory requirement and keep them safe as they have direct contact with the soil.

The long term exposure is a risk for these workers so PPE is an important additional protection for them.

Our approach to dust and asbestos management incorporates measures to protect removal workers as well as those people outside the exclusion zone. For example, extensive air quality monitoring, use of water and geofabric (orange or white) to securely cover asbestos containing materials and 'dust block' to seal dirt.

All works that are undertaken by these qualified professionals are overseen by the Contractor's Hygienist, The Children's Hospital at Westmead Stage 2 Redevelopment's Remediation Consultant and the independent NSW Environmental Protection Agency Accredited Site Auditor.

For more information or if you identify any hazards, you should immediately contact us:

Ph: 9978 5401

Email: NSWH-HI-kids@health.nsw.gov.au.

Website: <https://westmeadkidsredevelopment.health.nsw.gov.au>