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Medical complex simply super idea

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A SUPER medical clinic will be built on Cairns' southern side after the Federal Government signed a \$5 million contract to have one up and running in Edmonton by the end of next year.

Health Minister Nicola Roxon, Leichhardt MP Jim Turnour and Sydney-based contract winner Balance Healthcare's chief executive Kate Gunn signed off on the deal on the Cairns Esplanade yesterday.

The clinic will include a new three-storey building that will accommodate general practice, nurses, medical specialists, allied health professionals and other health care providers within a planned medical precinct at Edmonton.

But the clinic's services will not be restricted to Edmonton with several other independent medical services aligning with Balance, including the CBD McLeod St Medical general practice.

"The others are allied health services in the CBD, including occupational therapy, physiotherapy, dietician and chiropractic services in different locations," she said.

While Ms Gunn declined to name those businesses, she said there was also a dieti-



Heading in the right direction: Jim Turnour and Nicola Roxon at the Cairns Esplanade yesterday.

cian who had signed up at Smithfield. She said all of the "spokes" radiating out of the Edmonton hub would be electronically linked to create a co-ordinated system of health care.

Balance chairman Dr John Aloizos said the model driving super clinics was the future of primary healthcare.

"The integration of multi-discipline patient centred holistic health care will

become the norm," he said. Mr Turnour said Edmonton had been chosen as the preferred site as it had been identified as the largest growth area and most in need after a series of consultation studies and independent advice by a panel of experts.

The proposed site is at the Edmonton Business and Industry Park owned by Pregno Family Investments who have also submitted a proposal to provide Queensland Health with land for a hospital adjacent to where the proposed super clinic will be located.

However, earlier this year Cairns Regional Council rejected the Pregno application for the business and industry park because of uncertainty about the future route of the Bruce Highway as part of the Mt Peter Master Plan.

The Pregno family has appealed against that decision to the Planning and Environment Court.

The revelation comes just weeks after Mr Turnour co-announced that Cairns company Aimtek had a \$300 million contract to help build new navy destroyers.

It was later revealed that the company had yet to secure a \$20 million performance bond to finalise the deal.



That's official: Balance Healthcare's chief executive Kate Gunn signs on the dotted line flanked by Karen Crouch (left), Jim Turnour and Nicola Roxon yesterday when a super medical clinic deal for Edmonton was finalised. Pictures: VERONICA SAGREC