



MR Phillip Bain displays a model of the proposed Northcote Community Health Centre as new premises.

Community health centre to move to new \$1.5m home

TENDERS will be called next february for a \$1.5 million community health centre in Separation St, Northcote.

The building next to the library will house the Northcote Community Health Centre which is now at 326 High St.

The president of the centre's committee of management, Mr Phillip Bain, said he was excited and pleased that the project had been approved.

"The new centre will allow us to expand our range of services and to increase our staff by about 10," he said.

"A great deal of work has gone into ensuring that the new building is designed in a way most appropriate to our needs. It will complement the open, integrated and non-clinical approach of the centre.

"Extensive research has gone into finding out the services most needed in Northcote and the requirements of local residents. Unlike most health centres, Northcote decided to undertake a major survey of health needs in the area.

"This study will have immediate benefits in guiding the committee of management and staff in decisions which must be made in relation to planning and service provisions, particularly after the move to the new

centre," Mr Bain said.

Northcote Community Health Centre provides a variety of services, including community nursing, chiropody, physiotherapy, family planning, occupational therapy, social groups, marriage guidance, assessment for hearing defects and professional services for housebound people.

A Greek health worker is available, the direction for the expansion of these services and for additional services in the new building will be partly influenced by the findings of the Northcote health survey.

A working model of the new centre has been prepared. It incorporates a large open reception area-waiting room with sky-lights, three courtyards and many consulting rooms on each of the building's two levels.

"It will be in keeping with our unclinical philosophy. There will be no lin floors, glaring lights or hospital atmosphere," Mr Bain said.

"In our current premises, space cannot be used effectively there are problems with access and it is often cramped. It was not designed to be a health centre. It was a bank.

"There is a waiting list for some of our services. The centre is used to capacity. The new building and increased staff will improve our services and will be a great asset for Northcote," Mr Bain said.