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You are at: [Home](#) > [News](#) > Media Release Archive

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Hospital patients evacuated during storm – Coonabarabran

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Police have helped to evacuate hospital patients and staff during a severe storm at Coonabarabran, in the state's central west.

Around 5.45pm yesterday (Wednesday 26 November), the township was lashed by large hail, strong winds and heavy rain.

Hail blocked the gutters and drainage system of the Coonabarabran Hospital, causing water to build up in the internal roof cavity.

As a result, the ceiling in the high dependency ward (I.C.U.) collapsed.

Other areas of the hospital were also flooded and the electrical system damaged.

Police from the Mudgee Local Area Command were called to the scene and a decision was made to evacuate seven patients and 10 staff from the building.

The patients were discharged to relatives, Dubbo Hospital and an adjacent nursing home.

No-one was injured by the storm.

The hospital's emergency department was declared safe and remains open to treat life-threatening cases.

Authorities received 21 other calls for assistance with issues ranging from roof damage to minor flooding.

The Coonabarabran Police Station also suffered water damage to its electrical system and carpet.

In addition to police in the area, the NSW Fire Brigades, Rural Fire Service, Volunteer Rescue Association and State Emergency Service were activated to respond to storm damage.

Clean-up operations will continue this morning

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