

Shenhua starts spending \$1 million in community

and educational material to help the volunteers in their role."

Active Minds spokesperson Jim Coombes expressed the group's sincere appreciation for the support of Shenhua and outlined plans for a seminar in Gunnedah next year conducted by the Schizophrenia Association.

"This way we can hopefully target schools and get in at grass roots level to assist children dealing with mental health issues or supporting other family members," Mr Coombes said.

"A much-needed makeover for our drop-in centre is also in the pipeline," he said.

Shenhua also presented Paediatric And Maternity Support's (PRAMS) chairperson Rebecca Heath with a cheque for \$90,000.

PRAMS is a voluntary organisation that raises funds to improve the comfort, services and facilities in the maternity and paediatric ward at Gunnedah Hospital.

The funding will go towards refitting an under-utilised bathroom with a toilet, shower and spa, baby nursery refurbishment, labour bed, foetal monitor, as well as play equipment and a shaded area for the visitors garden.

"We're very excited about this partnership with Shenhua - we can really start to make a big impact," Mrs Heath said.

"We've always been enthusiastic

and passionate about PRAMS and it's great to be able to take this next step today with help from Shenhua," she said.

SHENHUA Watermark Coal has begun distributing \$1 million from its Community Fund to projects across the Gunnedah shire.

The Fund was established as a condition of Shenhua's coal exploration licence granted by the State Government.

The Chinese coal miner has set aside \$5 million over five years for community-based projects in the Gunnedah Shire, with one million dollars handed out each year.

Sixty three applications were received for the 2010 share of funding, with Shenhua selecting 12 projects.

The successful applicants, which were chosen by a community-based committee, covers a cross-section of sectors, including health, education, indigenous, agriculture, local government and small business.

The company has already given \$1 million to the Rural Health Centre.

"It was really important that the community tells us where we can spend the money," said Watermark Project Director Joe Clayton.

"We really tried to get a cross-section of projects," he said.

Mr Clayton admitted the committee had great difficulty narrowing the selections down to 12 as every nomination had been very worthy of funding.

"We would encourage those who missed out this year to re-apply in the next round," Mr Clayton said.

This week cheques were officially handed over for three of the 12 projects.

Gunnedah Homes for the Aged (Yallambee) received the largest slice of funding with \$230,000.

The money will go towards the refurbishment of the aged care hostel's 13 units.

New ovens will be installed in the kitchens, however the majority of funding will be spent on a complete renovation of the bathrooms which haven't been upgraded since the building was built in the 1960's.

President Delores Worthington said Yallambee, which relies on community funding to keep it operating, didn't expect the cheque.

"It's been a dream that one day we might get the bathrooms done but we didn't know how," she said.

"There will be a lot more comfort in the bathroom. It's very basic."

Delores also thanked the Gunnedah community for its "tremendous" support for the organisation saying it "wouldn't be able to survive without it".

A cheque of \$99,426 was also handed over to Gunnedah's Active Minds mental health support group.

The funding will help refurbish the drop-in centre and provide training



PAEDIATRIC And Maternity Support (PRAMS) received a cheque for \$90,000 from Shenhua Watermark Coal.



DELIGHTED Active Minds volunteers pictured with Shenhua representatives and their cheque for \$99,426, to be used for support programs, educational materials and refurbishment of the drop-in centre in the Salvation Army rooms.