



Jillian Skinner
Minister for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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PATIENT WI-FI A HIT AT CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS IN SYDNEY

More than 52,000 young patients and their families have benefited from a new patient Wi-Fi service piloted in the Sydney Children's Hospital Network since April.

Health Minister Jillian Skinner was joined by Parramatta MP Geoff Lee and Seven Hills MP Mark Taylor to view the new service at The Children's Hospital at Westmead, which, along with the Sydney Children's Hospital at Randwick, are the first NSW public hospitals to connect patients with free wireless internet.

Over the last two years the NSW Government has invested more than \$30 million to improve Wi-Fi services in health facilities, including building a secure, high-speed broadband network to connect over 150 hospitals and facilities across the state.

Mrs Skinner said the service, known as the Health Wide Area Network, is the critical infrastructure that makes patient Wi-Fi possible.

"During stays in hospital, many patients can feel cut off from extended family, friends and the outside world," Mrs Skinner said.

"Wi-Fi access means patients can keep in touch with their nearest and dearest and their parents can stay connected with their workplaces."

All appropriate internet security filters are in place and most patients are using the service for video communication such as Skype, streaming music and social media.

The Sydney Children's Hospital Network pilot has been so successful that the NSW Government will now look to extend the service to other hospitals, with the first regional patient Wi-Fi service commencing at Port Macquarie Hospital shortly.

Local Health Districts will have a choice over the type of patient Wi-Fi service they wish to provide, with options available for free and paid services.

The same Wi-Fi network operating in the Sydney Children's Hospital Network is allowing clinicians to access core clinical systems from their patients' bedsides, including electronic Medical Records (eMR) and Electronic Medications Management (eMeds).

The Children's Hospital at Westmead is the first paediatric hospital in Australia to go live with eMeds technology.