



# The Hon Jillian Skinner MP

## Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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#### **SWEEPING NEW TOBACCO REFORMS**

Smoking will be banned in playgrounds, public sports grounds, swimming pools, public transport stops and entrances to public buildings, under sweeping new tobacco reforms announced today by the Minister for Health, Jillian Skinner.

The *NSW Tobacco Strategy* is one of the most progressive tobacco reforms in Australia, which will include a smoking ban in commercial outdoor dining areas from 2015.

Smoking-related illness accounts for around 5,200 deaths and 44,000 hospitalisations per year in NSW and costs around \$8 billion to the NSW economy each year.

The NSW Government will take the drastic new measures in a bid to reduce the harm which tobacco imposes on our community.

Minister Skinner said the NSW Liberals and Nationals, who have led the way in tobacco control measures, are sending yet another clear message about anti-smoking.

“Reducing the harm which tobacco inflicts on our community is a key priority for the O’Farrell Government,” Mrs Skinner said.

“The distress and cost that smoking inflicts on families, and the burden this imposes on NSW’s health system, is simply not acceptable,” she said.

“This is a cornerstone of the NSW Government’s strengthened commitment to preventive health, to keep people healthy and out of hospital.”

Minister Skinner said the strategy has a key focus on disadvantaged populations such as Aboriginal communities and mental health consumers, which experience significantly higher smoking rates.

“The degree of smoking in some of our most vulnerable groups continues to greatly exceed the average and is of serious concern,” Minister Skinner said.

Local Health Districts will be supported to ensure that there is no smoking on NSW Health grounds.

The NSW Government is aiming to introduce these measures through a Bill in Parliament in the coming months.

To honour the NSW Government's MOU with ClubsNSW, existing smoking provisions will remain in outdoor dining areas until March 2015.

The NSW Liberals and Nationals have led the way in tobacco control measures.

- The Greiner and Fahey governments were the first in Australia—perhaps the first in the world—to ban smoking in public offices, to ban tobacco advertising of sporting events and many other anti-smoking measures;
- The NSW Liberals and Nationals have supported all tobacco control legislation ever introduced to NSW Parliament; and
- The NSW Government wholeheartedly supported the Federal Government's plain packaging legislation.

"The NSW Government will lead an education campaign to inform the community, businesses and affected agencies about these changes," Mrs Skinner said.

"I look forward to maintaining our strong stance on anti-smoking laws as we work to reduce the burden on our NSW health system."