



# The Hon Jillian Skinner MP

## Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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29 February, 2012

#### **\$10,000 SCHOLARSHIPS TO ATTRACT MORE NURSES**

Nurses who are looking to re-enter the public health system could now have the full cost of the \$10,000 re-entry program paid for by the O'Farrell Government, the Minister for Health Jillian Skinner, announced today.

The NSW Government will offer sixty \$10,000 scholarships over the next two years, for those eligible to re-enter the workforce after a break of between 5 and 10 years.

Scholarships will be awarded on the basis that recipients will work in the public health system for at least two years.

In a visit to the College of Nursing today, the Minister congratulated the recipients of the Government's first round of scholarships.

"I was pleased to be able to meet with these nurses today and to provide good news that the Government will fund the full cost of the course to make it easier for them to return to nursing," Minister Skinner said.

"We want to make sure that anyone who is being deterred by the cost of the course knows that the NSW Government has these scholarships available," she said.

"Whilst the NSW Government has no ability to change the national regulations set by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia or the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, I share concerns about the cost of re-entry course – that's why we are not only covering the full cost of the course, but we're making more scholarships available.

"We are committed to employing an additional 2,475 nurses in our first term of Government. We have already increased the number of nurses by 1,011 and have recruited an extra 2,163 new graduate nurses.

"This is about allowing registered and enrolled nurses to return to public health with the latest skills and knowledge. We value our hard working nurses and want to help them regain their registration and return to work in our hospitals."

The NSW Government will canvass the demand for these scholarships and look to extend on a rolling basis if necessary.

Further information can be found at:

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/nursing/scholarships.asp>