



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

13 September, 2012

FRONT-LINE INITIATIVES IMPROVE CARE FOR SERIOUSLY ILL PATIENTS

Seriously ill patients in NSW are being better monitored and more effectively treated using phone apps and innovative programs developed and implemented by frontline clinicians.

“These are the kind of welcome initiatives that arise from our encouraging ideas from front-line staff in a devolved health system,” said Health Minister Jillian Skinner.

“With these new tools, nurses and doctors are better able to identify and reduce preventable harm to patients with severe infection and sepsis (blood poisoning).

“A phone app developed by the NSW Clinical Excellence Commission, and launched today to mark World Sepsis Day, will help doctors and nurses with early recognition and prompt treatment of at-risk patients,” Mrs Skinner said.

Sepsis claims approximately 6,000 lives each year across Australia. It occurs when the body’s response to infection injures its own tissues and organs, leading to shock, multiple organ failure and death. Sepsis causes more deaths than prostate cancer, breast cancer and HIV/AIDS combined.

“Our health staff are among the best in the world and this app will be a great tool for doctors and nurses to aid in their delivery of quality care to NSW patients,” Mrs Skinner said.

Minister Skinner today visited Sydney Hospital with the CEO of the Clinical Excellence Commission, Prof Cliff Hughes, to also announce that starting this week every ward in NSW public hospitals will display posters indicating performance data on hand hygiene.

“Our hospital staff lead the country in improved hand-washing rates and I am always incredibly impressed when I see the efforts our Nurse Unit Managers and others throughout hospitals have made to make it routine practice for not only staff but also those visiting wards.

“Hand-washing has been shown to be the greatest barrier to infection spread in our hospitals and it is now common to see bottles of alcohol based hand rub in every ward.

“It’s important that everyone involved in health, those being cared for and those providing the care, accept hand hygiene as a simple, but essential thing to do,” Mrs Skinner said.