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MEDIA STATEMENT

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HOSPITAL BED NUMBERS

The NSW Government is committed to open and transparent reporting of beds made available in the state's public hospitals.

Prior to the election, the NSW Liberals & Nationals committed to making an additional 1,390 beds available in the state's health system. Already 707 beds have been made available since the election.

The NSW Government has also standardised the collection of data across the State in the reporting of bed numbers.

As part of more transparent reporting of available hospital beds in NSW, the Government has implemented a new means of analysis of bed numbers.

There are four main categories of hospital beds in this state:

- **Beds available for admission from emergency department** – these are beds that are in wards ready for admission of patients from the emergency department;
- **Other hospital beds** – these are beds that can be found in specialist units such as burns and transplant units;
- **Other beds** – these include Hospital in the Home, residential/aged care and respite beds;
- **Treatment spaces** – these beds can be found in the emergency department, in operating theatres and recovery rooms, delivery suites (including bassinets), hospital transit lounges or are used for same-day therapy or dialysis chairs.

In 2002, the former Labor Government started counting cots and bassinets as hospital beds to boost their bed numbers without adding a single new hospital bed to the health system.

Under Labor, everything from renal dialysis chairs to bassinets and transit lounges were counted as beds. This was shameful practice to cover up their cuts to health.

NSW Health utilises a number of indicators to assess the quality of patient care in this state.

Bed numbers provide a useful context for understanding capacity available in the health system, while service activity, emergency department and elective surgery performance indicators, ambulance response times and Bureau of Health Information reports contribute to the overall picture of patient outcomes in NSW.