



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health
Minister for Medical Research

Kevin Humphries MP

Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Healthy Lifestyles

MEDIA RELEASE

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GREAT DAY FOR DENTAL HEALTH CARE IN NSW

The state's third largest oral health centre has today been officially opened at Nepean Hospital.

Health Minister Jillian Skinner and Minister for Healthy Lifestyles Kevin Humphries were joined by Federal Minister Tanya Plibersek to open the Nepean Centre for Oral Health - an \$8 million project jointly funded by the NSW Government and the Commonwealth as part of the \$139 million redevelopment of Nepean Hospital.

The opening of the centre came on a day on which:

- Ms Plibersek and Mrs Skinner announced NSW had signed a *National Partnership Agreement on Treating More Public Dental Patients*, under which NSW will receive up to \$110.8 million from the Commonwealth to increase public dental services until March 31, 2015.
- Mr Humphries launched the NSW Government plan titled *Oral Health 2020: A Strategic Framework for Dental Health*.

The Nepean Centre for Oral Health comprises 32 chairs for general and emergency dental care; a new dental laboratory, which can accommodate up to six dental technicians; and a purpose-built training centre for undergraduate and postgraduate dental students.

"This is a very great day for dental health, not only for the people of western Sydney but throughout NSW," Mrs Skinner said.

"Funding under the National Partnership Agreement with the Commonwealth will alleviate pressure on waiting lists for public dental services, as will the Centre for Oral Health. Indeed, since it commenced operations, the centre has substantially reduced the adult general waiting list."

Mr Humphries said he was proud to unveil *Oral Health 2020: A Strategic Framework for Dental Health* on a red-letter day for dental care in NSW.

Oral Health 2020: A Strategic Framework for Dental Health has three main goals:

- to improve access to oral health services for all people in NSW
- to reduce disparities in oral health in different communities
- to promote primary prevention

“The NSW Government is committed to addressing the pressure on public oral health services caused not only by population growth but the increasingly complex services required by an ageing population,” Mr Humphries said.

“It is vital that we reduce the disparities in the oral health status of people in NSW, which is why this plan has a focus on patients who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and from rural areas.

“As Minister for Western New South Wales, I am particularly proud of this focus on improving oral health for people in Aboriginal and rural areas.”

Member for Penrith Stuart Ayres and Member for Blue Mountains Roza Sage were on hand for the opening of the Nepean Centre for Oral Health, which is the third largest in the state, behind Westmead and Sydney Dental Hospital.

“I am very proud that Nepean Hospital is now home to one of the largest oral health care centres in NSW,” Mr Ayres said.

“This will significantly improve dental outcomes for the people of western Sydney.”

Mrs Sage said: “As a former dentist I know that access to oral care contributes to better outcomes in general health, so this is a significant day for the communities served by Nepean Hospital, including the Blue Mountains.”

The *Oral Health 2020: A Strategic Framework for Dental Health* can be viewed at www.health.nsw.gov.au/oralhealth/Pages/oral_health_2020.aspx