



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

Sunday 12 May 2013

MINISTER MARKS INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY WITH NEW AWARDS

Health Minister Jillian Skinner has marked International Nurses Day by thanking the state's 47,500 nurses and midwives for their dedication, skill and compassion.

And she has chosen the day to announce the establishment of the inaugural *NSW Health Awards for Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery*.

"Today, on International Nurses Day, I want to thank our nurses and midwives for providing round-the-clock care to the 1.5 million people admitted to our hospitals each year, as well as many others who receive help at home and in the community.

"They provide not only medical care and expertise but emotional support and companionship to their patients. I admire them and I thank them," Mrs Skinner said.

Mrs Skinner said nominations for the *NSW Health Awards for Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery* will be invited from community members, patients, colleagues and professional in a range of categories:

- Excellence in nursing - registered nurse
- Excellence in nursing - enrolled nurse
- Excellence in nursing - assistant in nursing
- Excellence in midwifery
- Excellence in leadership
- Excellence in partnerships with patients, families and carers
- Excellence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health care
- Excellence in education, research and innovation
- Excellence in team clinical practice

The nurse or midwife judged to have had an outstanding career of service will be awarded the Judith Meppem Lifetime Achievement Award, named in honour of NSW's first Chief Nurse.

The *NSW Health Awards for Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery* will be open to nurses and midwives registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia, as well as assistants in nursing. Nominees must be working in the NSW public health system at the time of nomination

Nominations will open online (www.health.nsw.gov.au) on Monday June 3. The awards will be announced in September.

“There would be few of us who have not come in contact with a nurse or midwife, whether at a time of joy, such as the birth of a child, or a time of crisis, confusion and grief,” Mrs Skinner said.

“These nurses and midwives may be strangers when we meet them but they can feel like friends at the end of our journey.

“The inaugural *NSW Health Awards for Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery* is an opportunity for the community to seek public recognition for nurses and midwives who have shown excellence in patient care.”

Mrs Skinner said she was proud of the NSW’s Government’s achievement in recruiting nurses and midwives.

“Prior to coming to government in March 2011, we promised to increase the nursing and midwifery workforce by 2,475 over four years. We met this milestone in half that time.

“There are now 4000 more nurses and midwives employed by NSW Health than when we were elected.

“In 2013 alone, 2000 graduate nurses and midwives are beginning their careers in our hospitals. This is an exciting time for them,” Mrs Skinner said.