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NSW GOVERNMENT BOOSTS HEALTH BY \$884 MILLION

Over 100,000 more people will be treated in emergency departments, hospital wards or receive planned surgery because of record health funding in the NSW Budget, Health Minister Jillian Skinner said today.

An additional \$884 million will be invested in the NSW health system in 2013-14, an increase of 5.2% compared to the previous year. The recurrent budget for NSW Health is now a record \$17.9 billion, plus an additional \$1.2 billion on capital works.

The Budget will fund improved services for patients and continue to drive building programs at the state's hospitals and health facilities.

Highlights of the 2013-14 Budget include:

- **\$220 million** for increased activity (an extra 69,000 emergency department attendances, an extra 34,000 patients admitted to hospital including surgery for an extra 3000 patients, extra outpatient clinic appointments and new sub-acute services) as well as additional intensive care services for babies, children and adults.
- **\$1.2 billion** in capital funding to upgrade and redevelop hospitals and health facilities across the state, including Blacktown Mount Druitt, Campbelltown, Lismore, Muswellbrook, Kempsey, Port Macquarie, Parkes, Forbes, Northern Beaches Health Service, St George, Prince of Wales, Royal North Shore, John Hunter, Hornsby Ku-ring-gai, Tamworth, Wagga Wagga, South East Regional Hospital (Bega), Dubbo, Westmead, Shoalhaven, Hillston, Peak Hill, Yamba, Wollongong and Nepean.
- **\$51 million** for continued and new investment to bring to market new medical research innovations and life saving devices.
- **\$30 million** for integrated care - building new partnerships with the not-for-profit and private sector to deliver better care in the community.
- **\$15 million** to implement the Reform Plan for the Ambulance Service of NSW, including recommendations relating to aeromedical retrieval.
- **\$9.2 million** for 80 more Clinical Nurse/Midwife Specialists and Educators, including \$3 million for 30 new palliative care nurses across NSW.
- **\$7.3 million** to support the operating costs of new linear accelerators in cancer centres at Wollongong, Nowra, Gosford, Orange and Tamworth.

"This Budget will allow Local Health Districts to manage increased activity to meet growing demand through more surgeries, more emergency department treatments, more hospital admissions and more appointments at outpatient clinics," Mrs Skinner said.

"I am especially pleased this Budget recognises the importance of integrated care, which better connects those parts of the healthcare system outside our hospitals, such as primary, aged and community healthcare providers. This is the future of modern healthcare systems.

“Integrated care provides patients with options to avoid hospitalisation and enables those who run hospitals to think about providing the right sort of care where people need it. Many times that will be in a person’s own home or in the community, rather than in a hospital.”

Mrs Skinner said the Budget built on the NSW Government’s reputation for building for the future through an impressive capital works program of \$4.7 billion in our first term.

“I am proud that our government is delivering on that promise, with \$1.2 billion allocated to infrastructure in this year alone, to build or renovate hospitals and health care facilities around the state,” Mrs Skinner said.

“The former Labor Government let our infrastructure run down. This government is building it up so our clinicians, nurses and other hospital staff have facilities to match their outstanding levels of professionalism and care for patients.”

Since the March 2011 election, the NSW Government has employed in excess of 4000 more nurses, with around half of these working in rural and regional areas.

“This Budget continues to expand overall nursing numbers and provides funding for an extra 80 Clinical Nurse Educator and Clinical Nurse Specialist positions including 30 specialised nurses in palliative care,” Mrs Skinner said.

“The Budget builds on the Government’s commitment to palliative care. In addition to the \$3 million to employ about 30 palliative care nurses, a further \$5 million (on top of the \$5 million committed in last year’s budget) will commence implementation of the Government’s Plan to Increase Access to Palliative Care.”

“I am delighted that the 2013-14 budget continues to give priority to frontline health services by investing millions of dollars to provide more quality and timely treatment for the people of NSW.”