



# Jillian Skinner MP

## Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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Wednesday, 3 July 2013

#### **MINISTER MARKS MILESTONES FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH GRADUATES**

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today commended South Western Sydney Local Health District for their continued commitment to improving long-term employment outcomes of Aboriginal people.

During a visit to Bankstown Hospital, Mrs Skinner met with recent graduates of the Aboriginal Trainee program, including Robyn Palmans who, last month, was awarded the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year award at the 2013 Southern Sydney Regional Training Awards.

Mrs Skinner said since February 2013, the program has already seen five graduates permanently employed at Bankstown Hospital, with a further four students continuing the program this year.

"The program gives trainees a valuable opportunity to actively participate in practical training as well as completing necessary education qualifications, all while receiving mentoring and cultural support throughout their traineeship," Mrs Skinner said.

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Victor Dominello welcomed the Aboriginal Traineeship Program as a pathway to long-term employment for Aboriginal people.

"Having a career in a sector such as public health not only helps people gain personal confidence and have a chance at economic advancement, but allows young Aboriginal people to become role models in their communities," Mr Dominello said.

Mrs Skinner said it is vital to involve the Aboriginal community in the delivery of their health care.

"It's important that we engage and support our Aboriginal workforce to deliver effective and culturally appropriate health services to local Aboriginal communities.

"The Aboriginal Traineeship program at Bankstown Hospital is just one of many trainee programs Local Health Districts across the State have implemented to achieve our commitment to increase the number of Aboriginal staff in the NSW Health workforce," Mrs Skinner said.

In 2011, NSW Health launched the *Aboriginal Workforce Strategic Framework 2011 – 2015* to increase employment opportunities across the public sector in clinical, non-

The key priorities of the framework are:

- Meeting the target of 2.6 per cent Aboriginal health workforce by 2015;
- Employing and retaining Aboriginal health workforce employees through the implementation of specifically designed Aboriginal identified and/or targeted recruitment and retention processes;
- Providing strong leadership and innovation to ensure the continuing growth and development of the NSW Health Aboriginal workforce;
- Providing employment to Aboriginal university graduates in health professions.

Under dedicated traineeship programs right across NSW, there are now trainees working and studying across many fields including health management, environmental health, mental health, population health and primary health care.

“The NSW Government is committed to ‘Closing the Gap’ in health outcomes for Aboriginal people in NSW,” Mrs Skinner said.

“I am delighted that more than 100 Aboriginal traineeships have been taken up in our hospitals and health facilities since 2011.”