



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

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MINISTER OPENS NEW \$450,000 PAIN SERVICE FOR ORANGE DURING NATIONAL PAIN WEEK

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today opened a new \$450,000 Pain Management Service that will improve the quality of life for people living with chronic pain in the Central West.

Mrs Skinner said improving the management of chronic pain was a major priority for the NSW Government.

“It is with great pleasure that I am able to open this new service during National Pain Week to ensure patients suffering chronic pain across the Central West now have access to tailored care,” Mrs Skinner said.

“One in five Australians will suffer chronic or persistent pain in their lifetime and it is estimated that 80 per cent of people suffering from chronic pain miss out on treatment that could improve their health and quality of life.

“The new pain service will enable 250 people to receive multidisciplinary care to assist them to manage their chronic or persistent pain.”

The NSW Government has committed \$26 million over four years to enhance the capacity of specialist services and expand and the number of pain clinics in NSW, most notably in rural areas.

“People living in rural NSW have a higher prevalence of injury and conditions often associated with chronic pain and providing better access to care and treatment can prevent an escalation of symptoms.

“The NSW Government is committed to ensuring patients across rural and regional NSW have access to quality, life-changing health services and this new pain clinic is a wonderful example of this commitment in action.

“The personalised approach of the Pain Service is delivered by a team of healthcare professionals who work with the patient to assess their condition, provide treatment and offer advice on self-management and lifestyle skills,” said Ms Skinner.

“Placing patients at the centre of their care and involving them at every step is an essential feature of this new model of care.”

The regional service is now available for people who suffer from pain that persists for more than three months or beyond the usual time for tissue healing. Referrals are made to the service by a GP.

Mrs Skinner opened the new Pain Service today while visiting Orange to attend the third meeting of the Ministerial Advisory Committee for Rural Health.

The Committee, which is co-chaired by Lismore surgeon Associate Professor Austin Curtin and the NSW Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Health, Melinda Pavey, was established to improve the delivery of health care and the general health of rural, regional and remote communities in NSW.

It is tasked with developing a NSW Rural Health Plan, which will deliver on health priorities and improved health outcomes over the next five years.

Discussions at today's Ministerial Advisory Committee for Rural Health will include e-health initiatives, planning for the future of health care in Western NSW, development of the Rural Health Plan, allied health and linkages between rural and metropolitan care.

For more information on the Ministerial Advisory Committee or Rural Health Plan, see the NSW Rural Health website: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/rural/>