



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

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AUDIT SHOWS STEADY IMPROVEMENT FOR NSW HEALTH

Health Minister Jillian Skinner has welcomed the NSW Auditor-General's report into health which recognises patient treatment times have been maintained or improved despite an increase in presentations.

Mrs Skinner said the report confirmed there is work to be done and NSW Health is getting on with the job of improving its financial, asset and workforce management.

"This year's health budget is a record \$17.9 billion, with an additional \$1.2 billion being invested to rebuild the state's hospitals and health facilities.

"This record funding has enabled us to treat more patients and employ more frontline clinical staff than ever before," Mrs Skinner said.

"All Local Health Districts as well as NSW Ambulance have seen increases in their budget this year to meet patient demand.

"The work being done on the ground to maintain budgets and workforce needs cannot be underestimated. I'm pleased the Auditor-General has acknowledged NSW Health is driving improvements in key finance and performance areas.

"The report recognised that all of our Local Health Districts (LHDs) treated 100 per cent of patients in the most urgent category within clinically recommended timeframes.

"Most Local Health Districts maintained or improved averages for treating patients within target timeframes across all categories," Mrs Skinner said.

Mrs Skinner said the report also showed that almost all capital projects were running either on or ahead of scheduled timeframes.

"I am thrilled that half of the 16 major projects, valued at \$50 million or more, are currently on track to be finalised a year before their scheduled completion date," Mrs Skinner said.

"Each of these projects will bring enormous benefits to their surrounding communities and demonstrate the NSW Government's commitment to future-proof our hospitals and health facilities.

"In June 2013, the Ministry completed the system design for its consolidated asset management system to combine multiple asset and facility management reporting systems. The aim is to provide a single registry and tracking system for the operation

and maintenance of hospitals and health facilities to ensure better planning across the system.”

The Auditor-General noted that the number of workers compensation claims had reduced by 19.1 per cent from 2011-12 to 2012-13, owing to a number of NSW Health initiatives to reduce the risk of injuries, including education programs and early intervention strategies to assist injured employees return to work.

“Improving the safety of our hospitals is integral to ensuring our staff can continue their life-saving work while also enhancing patient care,” Mrs Skinner said.

The report also noted that NSW Health has significantly improved procurement and receipting practices, resulting in a 39 per cent reduction of invoices on hold by June 2013 compared to the previous year.

“Health has implemented a number of initiatives to further reduce the number of invoices on hold including invoice scanning technology, electronic approval and regular monitoring by senior finance staff,” Mrs Skinner said.

“This shows that we have listened to the recommendations of the Auditor-General and acted to drive significant improvements.

“I would like to thank the Auditor-General for his insight and his acknowledgement of the hard-work NSW Health has done to continue improving our economic management,” Mrs Skinner said.

“I know steady improvements will continue to be made over the coming months for the benefit of patients and staff across the state.”