



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

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MINISTER WELCOMES GRADUATE NURSES AND MIDWIVES TO THE HUNTER

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today welcomed more than 200 graduate nurses and midwives who are beginning their careers with Hunter New England Local Health District this year.

Mrs Skinner was joined by Hunter MPs including Environment and Heritage Minister Robyn Parker (Maitland), Tim Owen (Newcastle), Andrew Cornwell (Charlestown), Garry Edwards (Swansea) and Craig Baumann (Port Stephens) at John Hunter Hospital to meet with some of the 208 graduates who will work in areas such as general medicine, maternity, mental health and paediatric nursing.

Mrs Skinner said most of the graduates started work this week with the remainder to start in coming months.

“I congratulate these graduate nurses and midwives on joining the ranks of their highly skilled and dedicated colleagues,” Mrs Skinner said.

“The Hunter is home to hospitals that are much-loved and trusted by their community and I know these new nurses and midwives, like local patients, are in safe hands.

“As the daughter of a nurse, I know the care and commitment it takes to join this proud profession and I wish all the new recruits well in their new career pathway.”

John Hunter, John Hunter Children’s Hospital and Belmont Hospital will welcome the biggest group of recruits, with 86 nursing graduates. Tamworth Hospital will receive 22 recruits, while 12 graduates will begin their nursing career at Maitland Hospital and a further 12 new graduate nurses will begin in mental health services between and Maitland and Newcastle.

Graduates will also be working in Muswellbrook, Singleton, Scone, Glen Innes and Moree facilities.

A total of 17 midwives will also start work within the Hunter New England region this week including 11 at John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle, five at Maitland Hospital and one at Manning Hospital in Taree.

Mrs Skinner said 34 per cent of the state’s new nurses are being recruited to rural and regional hospitals.

“The NSW Liberals & Nationals pledged to recruit an additional 2,475 (headcount) nurses in our first term.

“In half the time we surpassed our target and there are 4,100 (headcount or more than 2,800 FTE) extra nurses and midwives working in our hospitals and community than before we came to government,” Mrs Skinner said.

“I’m incredibly proud the NSW nursing and midwifery workforce now sits at more than 47,500 (headcount).

“There really is no better time than now to work in the NSW public health system – we’re rebuilding and recruiting more than ever before,” Mrs Skinner said.

Ms Parker said it is rewarding to see the NSW Government’s investment in the recruitment of new nurses making a difference to patient care.

“Nurses and midwives are at the very heart of our health system and it’s wonderful to see more of them joining the ranks at Maitland Hospital and other hospitals across the Hunter,” Ms Parker said.

Mr Owen said: “Our community is growing its own nursing workforce with many of the nurses and midwives recruited this year coming from the Hunter region.”

Dr Cornwell said: “Clearly the Hunter has a solid reputation as a supportive and interesting place to work and the number of graduates we attract year after year reflects this.”

Mr Edwards said: “This is an exciting time of year for our health system with more fresh faces joining the ranks and learning about the commitment to care that the Hunter is known for.”

Mr Baumann said: “I congratulate the region’s new nurses and midwives and wish them every success on their journey in the NSW public health system.”

Hunter New England Director of Nursing and Midwifery Karen Kelly said the new graduate program is an important opportunity for recruits to consolidate three years of theory at university into practice.

“The new graduate nurses are supported with a comprehensive orientation program and they are also provided with a mentor to help them settle in,” Ms Kelly said.

Most of the new nurses will rotate between services, which gives them a chance to find a specialty that interests them.