



# Jillian Skinner MP

## Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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Thursday 31 July 2014

#### MINISTER PAYS TRIBUTE TO STATE'S 48,000 NURSES AND MIDWIVES

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today announced the appointment of more senior nurses and clinical support officers and the roll-out of tablet devices to community nurses as part of the NSW Government's ongoing commitment to delivering high quality care to patients.

Mrs Skinner made the announcement at the 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association in Sydney, where she also revealed the record numbers of nurses and midwives now working in NSW.

"The NSW Liberals and Nationals Government promised to deliver an extra 2,475 nurses and midwives (by head count) in our first four-year term," Mrs Skinner said.

"I am proud to announce today that, since coming to government, we have employed over 4,600 extra nurses and midwives (by head count), which equates to 3,400 full-time equivalent positions.

"NSW has never had more nurses and midwives, with over 48,000 now employed in our health system. Nor have our nurses and midwives been better supported by government to carry out their vital work.

"However, I recognise that we need to be striving to find new ways to support, develop and grow our staff.

"Our dedicated nurses and midwives have told me the areas where additional support is required - notably in our small to medium hospitals and community health services - and I am pleased to announce that extra support today."

The boost to workforce and technology announced includes:

- **30 new Clinical Support Officers** for smaller acute hospitals and mental health units, to relieve nurses and midwives of non-clinical duties such as paperwork, freeing them up to focus on patient care.
- **30 new facility nurses** for smaller acute inpatient facilities, who will provide a supernumerary nursing resource. These nurses can be deployed across the facility to assist in managing unplanned spikes in activity. They operate over and above the planned Nursing Hours Per Patient Day allocation.

- Further enhancements to the role and number of **Nurse Practitioners**. These are registered nurses who are qualified to function autonomously in an extended clinical role, providing access to services for patients in rural and remote communities.
- **1,000 tablet devices** for community nurses, giving them access to real time patient specific clinical information and freeing up more time to spend with patients.

Mrs Skinner said the tablet devices are important step towards better integrating hospital and community services so, when appropriate, patients can receive care in their own homes, close to family and loved ones.

“I want to ensure our community nurses are equipped with the most up to date and easy to use technological support, which will give them and their patients the benefits that advances in technology and e-health are bringing to healthcare,” she said.

In closing her address to the NSWNMA conference, Mrs Skinner thanked the state’s nurses and midwives for the commitment and skill they bring to their work each day.

“On my regular visits to hospitals and health facilities across the state, I see the compassionate care that nurses and midwives provide to patients, their families and care givers. It is a large part of what makes me so proud to be NSW Minister for Health,” Mrs Skinner said.

“On behalf of the NSW Government, I thank our nurses and midwives for putting their patients first and for helping to make the NSW health system one of the best in the world.”