



Jai Rowell MP

Minister for Mental Health
Assistant Minister for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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MINISTER LAUDS WESTERN SYDNEY HOMELESSNESS HEALTH INITIATIVE

Minister for Mental Health and Assistant Minister for Health Jai Rowell today reinforced the NSW Government's commitment to strengthening healthcare and other government services for some of Western Sydney's most vulnerable residents, during a visit to Western Sydney Homeless Connect Day today.

More than 40 organisations and services converged on Parramatta Town Hall as part of the event to provide advice, support and access to essential services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, drawn from throughout Western Sydney.

"Western Sydney Homeless Connect Day provides a great opportunity to engage homeless and marginalised people with a wide variety of services in one location to assist them in any number of challenges they may be facing," Minister Rowell said.

"This event performs a vital role in assisting people to navigate through the various government and community services in a friendly 'one-stop shop' environment and find clear pathways to avoid homelessness.

"This financial year alone the NSW Government committed close to \$35 million to tackling homelessness in Western Sydney – an increase of over \$2 million dollars on 2013/14.

"I am incredibly proud to see first-hand the compassion and dedication shown in providing health care and other services for some of our most vulnerable community members."

Among the many services available on site during the event were dental screening sessions organised by Westmead Centre for Oral Health and the University of Sydney in recognition of the fact those with complex social and health needs often face challenges in accessing dental health care.

"It was great to see first-hand the dedicated oral health professionals and students providing dental screening and assistance to access dental care for some of the most vulnerable members of our community," Mr Rowell said.

Community and youth health workers from Western Sydney Local Health District were also on-site providing information on access to nursing and health assessments, and education on a range of health issues impacting the homeless.

"I congratulate the volunteers of Western Sydney Homeless Connect for their vision in bringing together these essential services of real need to many in our community at a critical time in their lives."