



# Jillian Skinner MP

## Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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#### **NSW COMMITTED TO FOUR-HOUR BENCHMARK**

NSW hospitals are absolutely committed to seeing emergency department patients within the four-hour benchmark, Health Minister Jillian Skinner said today.

Hospitals will continue to apply the 2014 target of 81 per cent pending the outcome of a clinical review into whether 90 per cent is a clinically-safe, long-term goal.

“The 90 per cent target for 2015 is part of the original National Partnership Agreement between states, territories and the Commonwealth, signed in 2011,” Mrs Skinner said.

“A key feature of that agreement was reward payments from the Commonwealth to states and territories for achievement of National Emergency Access Target (NEAT). The Commonwealth discontinued reward funding in last year’s Budget.

“The Queensland Government has advised state and territory health ministers it is reviewing the 90 per cent target.

“The states and territories believe this review will help determine if 90 per cent is a clinically-safe and appropriate long-term goal.

“Ministers are yet to receive the Queensland report. NSW intends to keep the 81 per cent target at this time.”

Mrs Skinner said Labor has no credibility when it comes to emergency department performance.

“When I became Health Minister, NSW hospitals were seeing 59 per cent of emergency department patients within four hours. In October last year that figure was 75.5 per cent.

“These improvements should not be underestimated - NSW hospitals are treating emergency patients faster than ever before despite huge increases in presentations.”

Mrs Skinner condemned Labor’s claim of cuts to the NSW health budget.

“There is no cut to the NSW health budget - this is a Labor lie. This year’s recurrent health budget is \$18.7 billion - a 5.2 per cent increase on the previous year and a 20 per cent increase since Labor was in government,” Mrs Skinner said.