



Jillian Skinner
Minister for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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ABORIGINAL MIDWIFERY STUDENTS JOIN NSW HOSPITALS

Health Minister Jillian Skinner has congratulated the largest cohort of Aboriginal student midwives to commence work in NSW public hospitals.

At NSW Parliament House, Mrs Skinner was joined by Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Leslie Williams and local MPs to meet six of the nine Aboriginal student midwives beginning postgraduate midwifery training at Blacktown, Royal North Shore, Westmead, Port Macquarie, Lithgow, Nepean, Fairfield, Wagga Wagga and Broken Hill hospitals.

The student midwives successfully applied for the training positions via the Midwifery Student Application for Recruitment and Training (MidStART) webpage.

“NSW has the highest number of Aboriginal midwives, at 79, and we are outperforming all other states,” Mrs Skinner said.

“We are committed to increasing the Aboriginal nursing and midwifery workforce even further through our Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Strategy. I hold all our nurses and midwives in the highest esteem for choosing two of the most rewarding careers in the public health sector.”

Mrs Williams said providing support to Aboriginal student midwives creates a culturally competent and safe midwifery workforce, which helps drive improvements in the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal mothers and babies.

“This year’s cohort of nine Aboriginal postgraduate midwifery students is the highest since the Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Strategy began in 2005. As a former nurse, I understand the invaluable role they play in their local communities,” Mrs Williams said.

As well as the Aboriginal postgraduate students, more than 2,000 graduate nurses and midwives (including 40 Aboriginal graduates) have this year begun careers at 132 NSW hospitals and health services, with just over a quarter working in rural and regional hospitals.

Prior to coming to Government in March 2011, the NSW Liberals & Nationals promised to boost the nursing and midwifery workforce by 2,475 in the first four-year term. There are now 5,300 extra nurses and midwives working in the NSW public health system, taking the state's nursing and midwifery workforce to more than 49,000.

For more information on the MidStART program, visit:

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/nursing/employment/pages/midstart.aspx>