

Tuesday 17 June 2014

RECORD \$19.9 BILLION HEALTH BUDGET BOOSTS FRONTLINE CARE

Record health funding in the NSW Budget will enable an extra 120,000 patients to be treated in an emergency department or admitted to hospital this year, Health Minister Jillian Skinner said today.

Recurrent spending in health will be \$18.7 billion in 2014-15 - an increase of \$929 million (or 5.2%) on a like-for-like basis compared to the previous year. Almost \$1.3 billion will be spent on capital works in 2014-15, taking the total health budget to around \$20 billion.

The highlights of the 2014-15 NSW Budget for health are:

- **\$300 million for increased activity** (compared to an extra \$220 million for increased activity in the 2013-14 Budget). This comprises funding for 80,000 extra emergency department admissions (up from 69,000 last year) and 40,000 extra patient admissions to hospital (up from 34,000 last year), including 3000 extra elective surgeries (equal to last year).
- **\$220 million to retain patient services previously funded by the Commonwealth** under the National Partnership Agreement on Improving Public Hospital Services and National Partnership Agreement on Longer Stay Older Patients, both of which will terminate on June 30.
- **\$1.3 billion in capital works funding to build/redevelop health facilities.** The massive capital works program includes:-
 - \$5 million to commence redevelopment of Westmead Hospital
 - \$4 million to commence redevelopment of St George Hospital
 - \$2.2 million to commence expansion of Sutherland Hospital
 - \$2.7 million to commence redevelopment of Gosford Hospital
 - \$1.5 million to start building the new Byron Central Hospital on a greenfield site
- **\$30 million for integrated care** as part of the NSW Government's commitment to spend \$120 million over four years to provide seamless care for patients across the whole health system.
- **\$24.5 million from the capital works program to commence construction on five new ambulance stations** at: Bankstown, Blacktown, Kogarah, Liverpool and Penrith and purchase additional metropolitan sites.
- **\$15 million to employ 115 new clinical nurse educators/midwife educators and specialists**, completing the election commitment of 275 new positions.

- **\$83 million** from the capital works program for **e-Health/improved ICT support for patient care** (including funding to ensure rural hospitals/health facilities have sufficient network capacity to access electronic patient data; funding to upgrade ICT systems; funding to deliver the second stage of the HealtheNet project to design and begin development of an integrated care portal for doctors, patients and other providers).
- **\$10 million for palliative care** as part of the NSW Government's commitment to spend an additional \$35 million over four years. A further **\$3 million** to implement new models of care for renal palliative care patients.
- **\$7 million to expand Hospital in the Home services**, working in partnership with the non-government sector through telemedicine and community nursing services.
- **Preventive health - \$18 million** for anti-smoking and skin cancer protection campaigns and **\$19 million** to continue programs such as the Healthy Children's Initiative and Healthy Workers Initiative (formerly funded by the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health but discontinued by the Commonwealth).
- **\$6.8 million to improve access to pain management services**, notably in rural areas (part of the Government's commitment to spend \$26 million over four years)
- **\$5 million for Enable NSW**, which provides aids and equipment for rehabilitation and to keep people out of hospital (bringing funding to \$46 million in 2014-15).
- **\$2 million** to increase capacity for caring for **young people with a brain injury** in an appropriate setting
- an extra \$800,000 to provide 22 more cochlear implants for children and adults in response to patient demand.

Mrs Skinner said: "As our ageing, growing population drives demand for frontline care, the health budget of almost \$20 billion will deliver record levels of service from our emergency departments to our wards.

"Whereas the former Labor government let our hospitals run down, the NSW Liberals & Nationals are investing almost \$1.3 billion in capital works this year - bringing the total spend on infrastructure to \$4.8 billion in our first term.

"We have also significantly bolstered our clinical workforce, recruiting more than 4,100 extra nurses and midwives (2,800 full-time equivalent) and 1,400 extra doctors since we were elected in March 2011."



Budget 2014-15

Rebuilding NSW

Mrs Skinner said the significant allocation of funds for integrated care in the Budget is essential to ensuring the future of the health system.

“We will partner with primary care, the private sector, non-government organisations and others to ensure patients receive the right care in the right place at the right time,” Mrs Skinner said.