

## Media Release



## Minister for Health

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## BIGGEST EVER NSW NURSING RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN STARTS

State Plan Priority S1 Improved access to quality health care  
 State Plan Priority S2 Improve survival rates and quality of life for people with potentially fatal or chronic illness through improvements in health care  
 State Plan Priority S3 Improved health through reduced obesity, smoking, illicit drug use and risk drinking  
 State Plan Priority F1 Improved health and education for aboriginal people  
 State Plan Priority F3 Improved outcomes in mental health  
 State Plan Priority F5 Reduced avoidable hospital admissions

NSW Health Minister John Hatzistergos today launched the biggest ever nursing recruitment drive ever carried out in NSW.

Mr Hatzistergos said the '*There's more to nursing*' campaign is a \$2 million three month advertising campaign designed to attract:

- School leavers,
- People seeking a career change, and
- Former nurses looking to return to nursing.

"The campaign includes a series of television commercials; newspaper, magazine and cinema advertisements and targeted online advertising - all supported by a NSW Health 1800-number and micro-website," he explained.

"It features actual nurses, not actors, making the message all the more real. Nursing is a great career – and we want to get that message out to the community.

Mr Hatzistergos said there is now a record 40,748 full time equivalent nurses and midwives working in NSW public hospitals - an increase of 6,744 or almost 20% nurses in the last four years.

"In just 15 months since Morris Iemma became Premier, 1,335 extra nurses have been recruited into the system, many more than the 400 the Opposition want to recruit over the next four years," he said.

"We are making real progress in recruiting nurses to our hospitals, but there's more work to do - NSW Health is currently actively recruiting for 1,300 positions across NSW."

Mr Hatzistergos said NSW now has the highest paid nurses in the country - wages will have increased by 47% from 1999 to 2007.

"The Iemma Government has also passed legislation to protect them from Federal Work Choices laws – protection which would disappear under Peter Debnam," he added.

"Nursing and midwifery in the NSW public health system offers excellent pay, flexible working hours and conditions and job security.

"The campaign highlights there are more ways of becoming a nurse or a midwife including nursing subjects in schools; TAFE enrolled nurse education; university courses for registered nursing and midwifery; and programs to support nurses and midwives returning to the system." Mr Hatzistergos said the campaign supports other NSW Government initiatives to increase the nursing workforce:

- In 2006, a total of 33,642 Registered Nurses and 5,582 Enrolled Nurses working across the health system have benefited from \$2.6 million in scholarships in specialties such as mental health, nurse practitioner training, medication administration.
- 1,469 nurses have returned to nursing through Nursing Re-Connect, a program which actively supports nurses and midwives not working health to return to nursing - this includes more than 400 across rural NSW.
- NSW Health's active overseas recruitment campaign has produced outstanding results with more than 1,143 experienced overseas registered nurses commencing employment in the last two years with another 681 offered jobs.
- Increasing the number of trainee enrolled nurse positions to 1200 in 2006 and providing \$15 million for the trainees' education and additional clinical support for them.

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