



The Hon Dr David Gillespie MP
Assistant Minister for Health
Member for Lyne

MEDIA RELEASE

21 April 2017

Nurses' important contribution to Australia's future health system

Coalition Government initiatives are helping to meet the challenge of ensuring the required nursing and midwifery workforce amid rising demands for health care.

Speaking at the Australian College of Nursing's policy summit in Canberra today, Assistant Minister for Health, Dr David Gillespie, reinforced the value of nurses in all areas of the health system.

"The nursing and midwifery workforce is the single largest health profession in Australia, almost ten times the size of the GP workforce," Minister Gillespie said.

"Demand for health care is increasing, and nurses are more essential than ever in ensuring safe, high quality care in all parts of our health system. The Coalition Government deeply values the contribution of nurses to the health system and we value their input to policy development."

Minister Gillespie said the Government was working to ensure nursing needs were met, particularly in rural and remote communities.

The Government funds areas of practice in nursing through initiatives like the Nursing in Primary Health Care Program, the Practice Nurse Incentive Program, and the 2015-16 Budget measure Streamlining Health Workforce Scholarships.

"More broadly, the role of nurses is expanding to fill gaps and provide new types of care – and this will continue," Minister Gillespie said.

"Nurses make up the majority of the registrations for Australian Government-funded palliative care projects that enhance the capacity of health professionals to deliver quality care to people near the end of their lives.

"And nurses will be integral to the implementation of Health Care Homes. This initiative will put the patient at the centre of care and will see nurses work with the person's GP and other health professionals to develop a tailored care plan to support the management of their chronic condition.

"While there are challenges ahead, nurses are very well placed to play a key role in these reforms, which put patients at the heart of our health system."

For more information, contact the Minister's Office on (02) 6277 4960