



**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP**  
**Minister for Health and Ageing**

29 September 2009

**Minister Consults on Dental Reform**

The Minister for Health and Ageing, Nicola Roxon, today visited The Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne to discuss recommendations from the National Health and Hospital Reform Commission with dental health professionals.

Dental health is among the starkest indicators of inequality for Australians today and improving access to dental health care is a key priority identified National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission's Report A Healthier Future for all Australians.

A recommendation from the Commission includes the establishment of a universal dental scheme to provide preventative and restorative dental care, as well as dentures, through 'Denticare Australia'. The additional costs of Denticare would be funded by an increase in the Medicare Levy of 0.75 per cent of taxable income.

The Rudd Government is taking concrete steps to improve Australia's health and hospital system after twelve years of neglect by the previous Liberal Government.

The \$490 million Medicare Teen Dental Plan provides eligible teenagers with access to preventative dental checks. More than 470,000 consultations have been undertaken by teenagers since its introduction in August last year.

On her visit to the Hospital, Minister Roxon went on a tour of the Hospital's facilities meeting with a family benefiting from the Teen Dental Program, which provides \$150 for eligible teenagers to receive a check up under this important dental program.

The Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne consultation is the 41st across the country to road-test the National Health and Hospital Reform Commission's proposed reforms.

The National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission report made recommendations for system-wide changes to Australian health care.

At today's Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne consultation Minister Roxon outlined the Commission's recommendations and met with the dental sector's professionals to discuss their priorities to improve oral health around the country.

All Australians are also able to send in their comments and contribute to the national debate on our health system via the [yourHealth.gov.au](http://yourHealth.gov.au) website.

**For all media inquiries, please contact the Minister's Office on 02 6277 7220.**