



**THE HON PETER DUTTON MP
MINISTER FOR HEALTH
MINISTER FOR SPORT**

MEDIA RELEASE

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Tribute to Typhoon Haiyan Teams

Federal Health Minister Peter Dutton today commended the doctors, nurses, paramedics and allied health professionals deployed to the Philippines to respond to Typhoon Haiyan which claimed more than 6000 lives and injured 27,000 others.

Mr Dutton visited the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre warehouse in Darwin this afternoon to meet members of the AUSMAT Alpha and Bravo teams to inspect the deployable medical assets ready for use in emergency situations including a field hospital and critical care and surgical supplies.

"The National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre was a Coalition government initiative announced by Prime Minister John Howard in 2004," Mr Dutton said.

"Following the first Bali bombing on 12 October 2002 the then Australian Health Minister, Tony Abbott, realised the need for a Top End centre of excellence in trauma management and surgery which could deploy doctors and medical equipment within the region should there be a need.

"Dedicated and expert clinical and support staff, first in Darwin, and then in hospitals all over Australia, came together and provided a world class response. From that bleak beginning, the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre was conceived.

"Since 2005, under then Health Minister, now Prime Minister Abbott, the Centre has been funded by the Commonwealth at around \$15 million per year, and that investment has brought together medical teams from across Australia into a single force that can be deployed in our region whenever required.

"The growth of the Centre since 2005, and its involvement in a range of local, national and international incidents, has well demonstrated the farsightedness of the initiative."

Mr Dutton and Ms Griggs attended an official reception, hosted by the Northern Territory government, this evening to thank the medical teams and pay tribute to the work of the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre and its Director, Dr Len Notaris.

"The Australian Medical Assistance Teams deployed to Tacloban comprised 74 staff and treated over 2,700 people, including over 220 surgical cases, of which 90 required major surgery," Mr Dutton said.

"Led by Doctors Ian Norton and Nicholas Coatsworth and comprising highly skilled professionals from all Australian states and territories and New Zealand, the teams provided a hospital service that functioned as an expert referral hub for serious critical care cases right across the Tacloban area."

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