



Jai Rowell MP

Minister for Mental Health
Assistant Minister for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT FOCUSSED ON IMPROVING ABORIGINAL ORAL HEALTH

Minister for Mental Health and Assistant Minister for Health Jai Rowell recently launched a plan focussed on enhancing dental health services provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across NSW, during a visit to Wyong's Yerin Aboriginal Health Service.

Mr Rowell was joined by Liberal candidate for The Entrance Michael Sharpe and some of the state's leading oral health experts in launching the Aboriginal Oral Health Plan 2014-2020.

Mr Rowell said the plan is a vital resource in ensuring dental health services and training continue to meet the need of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across NSW.

"This Plan aims to close the dental health gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in New South Wales by improving access to oral health services," Mr Rowell said.

"The NSW Government is keenly focussed on the oral health needs of Aboriginal people, investing \$5.5 million this financial year alone to ensure we meet the specific needs of Aboriginal dental patients across the state.

"We have also ensured that more Aboriginal people are supported to pursue a career in oral health, providing \$200,000 in funding over two years to an Aboriginal oral health scholarship program which has already assisted 14 students to complete their training.

"This plan will see the NSW Government building upon the many successful initiatives we already deliver to ensure Aboriginal people can access the oral health care they need, no matter where they live, and that we continue to expand our Aboriginal oral health workforce.

The plan was welcomed by Mr Sharpe and Liberal candidate for Wyong Sandra Kerr, who said it would serve to bolster the targeted Aboriginal oral health programs already delivered on the Central Coast.

"Locally we already have a strong and effective partnership between the Central Coast Local Health District and Yerrin Aboriginal Health Service which ensures Aboriginal people, including those not eligible for public dental health services, receive the treatment they need," Ms Kerr said.

"Our local oral health experts have developed oral hygiene programs focussed on the needs of Aboriginal families and after hours care. We look forward to some of the innovative local solutions delivered here being enhanced through the implementation of this plan," Mr Sharpe said.

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