

Baird backs tech savvy seniors

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NSW Premier Mike Baird and Minister for Ageing John Ajaka today announced a re-elected Baird Government will double funding to the popular Tech Savvy Seniors program, which provides low cost or free training for seniors in using computers, tablets and smart phones.

"We want to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in the digital world. Boosting the online skills of seniors delivers enormous health, social and community benefits," Mr Baird said.

"Being able to use online banking means no more waiting in bank queues, and social media technology means that seniors can stay more connected to loved ones and their community."

Under the NSW Liberals & Nationals \$2 million plan, the hugely successful Tech Savvy Seniors program will be expanded by:

- 3,500 more places per year across 30 regional and metropolitan community colleges and libraries
- The addition of a Tech Savvy Seniors Regional Road Show which will reach 40 regional locations
- The introduction of online banking courses for seniors

Mr Baird said that today's announcement builds on the significant support the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government has already provided to seniors.

"Today's announcement follows our \$343 million pledge to fund concessions that were cut by the Commonwealth Government in its Budget for the next four years," Mr Baird said.

"The Commonwealth Budget cuts were unduly harsh which is why we stepped in to make sure that seniors had access to the concessions they were entitled to."

Mr Ajaka said the NSW Government is also announcing today, with telecommunications partner Telstra, the Tech Savvy Seniors program is being expanded to include training in seven different languages.

"The program has been running since January 2013 and has provided benefits to more than 11,000 seniors," Mr Ajaka said.

"We estimate that over the next four years, more than 38,000 class places will be taken up by seniors.

"An independent evaluation by the University of Melbourne has found that for every \$1 invested in Tech Savvy Seniors more than \$10 is returned in social value.

"The partnership with Telstra is an excellent example of government and the business community working together to increase opportunities for seniors and support our ageing population."

Telstra Consumer Group Managing Director Karsten Wildberger said Telstra is committed to helping all Australians enjoy the benefits of being connected and this goes to the heart of what Telstra stands for.

"New communication technology gives people the opportunity to be more connected than ever, whether it be staying in touch with family and friends on social media or connecting with people and services in your local community," Mr Wildberger said.

"Developing the confidence and skills to use technology and participate in the digital community and economy is increasingly important for seniors. We want to make sure no one misses out on the benefits of being connected and we're pleased to be expanding the Tech Savvy Seniors program to reach new audiences, including culturally and linguistically diverse communities."

To find out more about the Tech Savvy Seniors Program visit www.telstra.com.au/telstra-seniors

Need to know more? What are the Government's or the Coalition's plans for social and community services? Do you need to know about current spending on social welfare?

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