



UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 5am, 18 November 2010

New program attracts doctors to regional hospitals

Deputy Premier and NSW Minister for Health Carmel Tebbutt today announced that regional hospitals in NSW will benefit from additional trainee doctors under the new Regional Preferential Allocation Scheme.

Ms Tebbutt said the scheme is running for the first time in 2011 and aims to attract a new generation of trainee doctors to 201 training positions in regional hospitals across the state.

“This new program builds on the success of the Rural Preferential Recruitment Program, in place since 2007, which this year enabled 53 doctors to complete the majority of their first two years of postgraduate training in rural hospitals – an increase from 15 in 2007,” Ms Tebbutt said.

“Attracting and retaining medical professionals in rural and regional communities can be particularly tough but this state is leading the way in supporting rural and regional training of doctors.

“Under the Regional Preferential Allocation Scheme, trainee doctors graduating from NSW universities will spend the majority of two years in a regional hospital setting where they develop their skills prior to entering specialty training.

“Regional hospitals experiencing workforce shortages will be given priority to ensure we are training young doctors in areas where they are most needed.”

“We have had a fantastic response from trainee doctors. Offers for the 201 positions are being made and the new doctors will commence working in January next year.”

Medical graduate intake for the 2011 intern year is now underway and is coordinated by the Clinical Education and Training Institute.

The Regional Preferential Allocation Scheme will place trainee doctors across the Gosford-Wyong, Hunter New England and Wollongong prevocational networks. These networks include the hospitals at Gosford Wyong, Shell Harbour, Shoalhaven, Bulli, Wollongong, Belmont, Newcastle, Maitland, Taree, and Tamworth

Ms Tebbutt said the NSW Government was committed to delivering the best possible health services to the people of NSW, no matter where they live.

“This Government will also invest \$28.9 million over the next four years to create 45 extra medical positions in rural areas to further boost rural and regional training of second and third year doctors.”

Media contact: Arjun Ramachandran 0403001146