

# Media Release

**The Hon Jenny Mikakos MLC**  
Minister for Families and Children  
Minister for Early Childhood Education  
Minister for Youth Affairs



Getting Things Done.  
Making Things Fair.

Tuesday, 27 March, 2018

## RECRUITING THE NEXT GENERATION OF MATERNAL HEALTH NURSES

More families with young children in regional Victoria will have extra support with a boost in the number of nurses and midwives to gain qualifications as Maternal and Child Health nurses.

Minister for Early Childhood Education Jenny Mikakos today announced 77 nurses have been successful in applying to the 2018 Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Nursing Scholarship program – with almost 40 per cent from regional areas.

It's the largest number of successful applications ever awarded under the program, which is designed to increase the quality and capacity of Victoria's already world-class nursing workforce.

Maternal and Child Health nurses provide families with support in the early years of their child's life, with free consultations, home visits and assistance through a 24-hour, 7 day a week telephone service.

Among the 30 successful regional applicants, five are from Ballarat, five from Geelong, three from Bendigo and three in Corangamite.

Nurses from Albury and Wodonga, Baw Baw, Mitchell, Wellington, Whittlesea, Macedon Ranges and Warrnambool have also been successful.

The MCH Nursing Scholarship program will provide up to \$830,000 for registered nurses holding a midwifery qualification to complete postgraduate education in maternal and child health nursing.

The program was expanded this year to take on almost double the number of nurses – up from 43 last year – and with the value of the scholarships increased to a maximum of \$10,000, up from \$5,000 in past years.

This initiative is part of the Andrews Labor Government's \$202.1 million Education State Early Childhood Reform Plan, announced in the 2017-18 Victorian Budget.

This plan recognises the importance of providing families with strong support in early childhood, so kids are ready for kinder, ready for school and ready for life.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Education Jenny Mikakos

*"We know the early years can shape a child's entire life – that's why it's so important to extend our Maternal and Child Health support for all parents."*

*"We're helping boost the number of highly-qualified nurses to ensure families have access to reliable, evidence-based information and support in the early years of their child's life."*