

# Media Release

The Hon Jenny Mikakos MLC  
Minister for Health  
Minister for Ambulance Services



**DELIVERING  
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Sunday, 20 January 2019

## **THOUSANDS OF DOCTORS, NURSES AND MIDWIVES START THEIR CAREERS**

Thousands of doctors, nurses and midwives are preparing to begin long and rewarding careers in Victoria's world-class public hospitals.

Around 810 first-year medical interns and 2,500 new nurses and midwife graduates will start their careers in 2019, ushering in a new era of highly-trained medical professionals to care for patients in hospitals and health services all over Victoria.

Regional Victoria will be a big winner, with 290 of the medical interns to be based at rural and regional hospitals.

The Andrews Labor Government is funding 500,000 more specialist appointments in regional Victoria, so that people don't have to travel long distances to get the care they need.

Victoria's next wave of doctors, nurses and midwives will receive the best education available, so they can offer the highest quality care. In 2018, the Labor Government invested \$90 million to train and develop more medical interns, nursing and midwifery graduates and allied health staff.

The Labor Government will always stand with our hard-working health staff so they can deliver the best care. Legislation introduced on the first day of the 59<sup>th</sup> Parliament will enshrine better nurse and midwife to patient ratios in law.

Once these improvements are made, the Government will commence a new round of changes that will see the total number of new nurses and midwives in Victoria reach 1,100.

The Government will also deliver on its commitment to create a \$50 million *Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Development Fund*, which will expand the existing Registered Nurse and Midwife Graduate Program and establish a graduate program for Enrolled Nurses for the first time.

This will employ 400 Enrolled Nurses over the next four years, with 100 of these positions to be available to TAFE graduates from next year – meaning Victorians will be able to study a Diploma of Nursing for free at TAFE, as one of the Labor Government's free priority TAFE courses, then start work as an enrolled nurse once they graduate.

The fund will also provide up to 400 postgraduate scholarships for current nurses and midwives to upgrade their skills, 400 places in programs such as the Postgraduate Midwifery Employment Program and refresher programs for 800 nurses and midwives currently registered but not practicing so they can re-enter the workforce.

It will also include \$10 million for grants, scholarships, graduate jobs and refreshers for regional students and current nurses and midwives.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos**

*"Congratulations to the hundreds of new doctors, nurses and midwives who are about to join our highly-trained army of health professionals. I wish them long and rewarding careers."*

*"Growing our health system to give patients the very best care that they can count on, no matter where they live, is a never-ending job that we're committed to."*

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