



The Hon Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 8 June 2012

The Minister for Health and Medical Research, Jillian Skinner and the Minister for Family and Community Services, Pru Goward, today announced the three organisations awarded tenders to establish and operate three new Family Referral Services in NSW.

Mrs Skinner said the new services will be established in Liverpool/Macarthur, Mid North Coast and Far North Coast regions and will improve the safety and wellbeing of children as part of the NSW Government's *Keep Them Safe* action plan.

"These providers will operate three referral services linking vulnerable children, young people and families in need of assistance with the most appropriate support services in their local area," Mrs Skinner said.

"They will provide free telephone advice and referrals as well as face-to-face advice and outreach services."

Ms Goward said the new services are expected to begin operations by the end of July 2012 and will highlight a unified approach towards child and family wellbeing, as advocated by Hon. James Wood AO QC in his Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in NSW.

"Five Family Referral Services currently operate across the Illawarra, Western NSW, Mount Druitt, New England and for the Hunter/Central Coast," Ms Goward.

"These successful tenderers have extensive experience in servicing vulnerable families with complex needs as well as expert knowledge of providing protective and nurturing environments for children and young people."

Over the next two years, funding will go towards:

- **Liverpool/Macarthur:** \$3.9 million for UnitingCare Children, Young People and Families to provide a service focused on people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities across Bankstown, Fairfield, Liverpool, Camden, Campbelltown and Wollondilly.
- **Mid North Coast:** \$1.9 million for the Benevolent Society (in partnership with Burrun Dalai Aboriginal Corporation Inc) to provide a service with a focus on Aboriginal communities across Bellingen, Coffs Harbour, Greater Taree, Great Lakes, Hastings, Kempsey and Nambucca.
- **Far North Coast:** \$1.8 million for Northern Rivers Social Development Council (in partnership with Interrelate Family Centres) for Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Kyogle, Lismore, Richmond Valley and Tweed.