



# Jillian Skinner MP

## Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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#### **PRAISE FOR MIDWIVES ON SPECIAL DAY**

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today paid tribute to the skill, dedication and compassion shown by thousands of registered midwives across NSW.

“Today - International Midwives Day - is an opportunity to reflect on the great contribution midwives make to the health of their nations,” Mrs Skinner said.

“In NSW, our midwives provide an essential service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

“Midwives are resourceful and skilled but they possess other qualities which come to the fore in the emotion-charged atmosphere of birth - empathy, compassion and a sense of calm under pressure.”

Mrs Skinner said she is delighted that midwives are involved in initiating new models of care to improving the birth experience for women in NSW. Examples include:

- increased access for Aboriginal families to pregnancy and birthing care in the Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Service at Muswellbrook.
- commencement of midwifery group practices at Armidale Hospital and Dubbo Hospital.
- provision of a continuity of care model for women of all risks at the Royal Hospital for Women.

“Midwives play a unique and privileged role in the lives of women and their families,” Mrs Skinner said.

“They share the immense joy which accompanies the arrival of a child but also the sadness which can accompany a birth.

“Today we acknowledge the many ways in which midwives support women - to prepare for birth, during the onset of labour and in the moments after birth - and we thank them for their dedicated service to the people of NSW.”

NSW Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer Susan Pearce said: “The World Health Organisation (WHO) recognises midwives as the health professionals best able to deliver safe, cost effective maternity services to the majority of families.

“Midwifery care is unique in the way it can influence the health of future generations.

“Midwives can give new parents the confidence and self-esteem that arises from a positive birth experience.

“The care they provide has a significant impact on changing families, communities and the world by saving the lives of mothers and babies.”

The themes for 2014 International Midwives Day are '*The world needs midwives now more than ever*' and '*Midwives: changing the world one family at a time*'.