



Northern Territory

BUDGET 2004

Moving the Territory ahead... **less tax, more jobs, great lifestyle**

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Peter Toyne
Minister for Health

18 May 2004

VALUING NURSES WITH MORE SUPPORT AND BETTER PAY

The Martin Labor Government's is delivering on its promise to put more nurses in Territory hospitals and clinics and provide them with more support and better pay, Minister for Health Peter Toyne said today.

Dr Toyne said nurses played a valuable role in our hospitals and clinics, often working in difficult circumstances to deliver health services to Territorians.

"As a Government, we are committed to providing nurses with better working conditions, greater access to professional development, and better resources," he said.

"We want to recruit, retrain and retain quality nursing staff in the Territory and that's what we're doing through Budget 2004."

A BETTER PAY DEAL FOR NURSES

The Martin Labor Government is working to ensure nurses are paid appropriately for the job they do.

Budget 2004 includes an extra \$4.6 million for nurses' salaries, taking total expenditure to \$116.8 million.

This follows a new pay deal which sees their wages rise by at least 11% over the next three years, although many nurses will actually see their pay packets increase by up to 13% under the new NTPS 2003-2006 Certified Agreement.

DELIVERING MORE NURSES

The Territory Government is on track to exceed its election commitment to create an additional 75 nursing positions in Territory hospitals.

There are already 48 new nursing positions in our hospitals and the Budget provides additional funding to add another 65 nursing positions in 2004-05.

\$1.4 million will be spent to employ an extra six nurses to phase out single nursing posts at four remote communities and provide two relief nurses to be based in Alice Springs.



BETTER ACCESS TO TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

“As part of our commitment to attracting and retaining quality nursing staff, the Government is helping nurses improve their qualifications,” Dr Toyne said.

Budget 2004 includes \$300,000 to provide nurses with study grants, as well as nurses with grants to pursue further study particularly in the areas of critical care, midwifery, renal and perioperative (pre-operation) care.

“We are working hard to improve health and community services, boost health resources and support staff in Territory hospitals,” Dr Toyne said.

