



NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Sweet PUBLIC victory for Maitland nurses and midwives

As tens of thousands of Maitland and surrounding Hunter families participate in Australia Day celebrations across the region, hardworking nurses and midwives are also jubilant today following confirmation the new Maitland Hospital at Metford will be a publicly built and run facility.

Maitland Hospital Branch of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association (NSWNMA) has campaigned for the new Maitland Hospital to remain in public hands since 2013, to ensure full access to public health services for all Lower Hunter residents.

Acting General Secretary of the NSWNMA, Judith Kiejda, said convincing the NSW Government a Public-Private Partnership or not-for-profit model would compromise service delivery and safe patient care had been a hard-fought battle, but she was pleased the right decision had been made.

"This is a very sweet victory for hundreds of nurses and midwives who work and live in Maitland and the surrounding areas," Ms Kiejda said.

"From the outset, our members were steadfast in their opposition of a Public-Private Partnership or anything other than a publicly owned and operated new hospital to service their rapidly growing community.

"When former Maitland MP Robyn Parker and former Health Minister Jillian Skinner continually ignored their concerns regarding patient safety and the delivery of public health services under a hybrid model, our Branch members never wavered.

"As advocates for safe patient care and a robust public health system, local nurses and midwives knew they had a professional obligation to speak up on behalf of the Maitland community and continue to lobby for a publicly built and run new state-of-the-art hospital.

"Confirmation today that the new Maitland Hospital at Metford will remain in public hands is a substantial win for our members – it signifies the collective power of local workers, community members and health sector unions to achieve the best possible outcome when common sense prevails.

"This is also a five from five victory. Five hospital privatisation backflips from the NSW Liberal-National Coalition," said Ms Kiejda.

The NSW Government has now capitulated on plans to privatise Goulburn, Bowral, Wyong, Shellharbour and Maitland Hospitals in the past 12 months.

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