



# Jillian Skinner MP

## Minister for Health Minister for Medical Research

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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#### **NSW GOVERNMENT LEADS WAY WITH LAUNCH OF CHRONIC PAIN WEBSITE**

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today launched a flagship website to improve the quality of life of people living with chronic pain in NSW.

Mrs Skinner was joined at the State Library of NSW by leading pain healthcare professionals, peak consumer groups and families whose children live with chronic pain as she launched the NSW Government's *Pain Management Network* website.

The website is built on the latest scientific evidence on how to manage chronic pain and includes practical tools and resources for people living with pain, as well as health professional such as GPs.

Mrs Skinner presented a collection of pain management books to State Librarian Dr Alex Byrne in recognition of the fact that some people do not have access to online information. The collection will be available in 70 other public libraries across NSW.

"Chronic pain affects one in five Australians - young and old. It reduces our ability to work, to attend school, to undertake hobbies - indeed it impacts on every aspect of daily life," Mrs Skinner said.

"Improving the management of chronic pain is a key priority for the NSW Government. In 2012, I was proud to launch the *NSW Pain Management Plan* and commit \$26 million over four years to enhance specialist pain services and expand the number of pain clinics in NSW, most notably in rural areas.

"Today we take another important step by launching the *ACI Pain Management Network* - a website which I am proud to say is an Australian first.

"People with chronic pain and those who care for them will now have better access to life-changing information that can make a difference to daily life and prevent an escalation of the symptoms often associated with chronic pain," Mrs Skinner said.

The *Pain Management Network* website was developed by the Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI), which is one of the six pillars of NSW Health. Visitors to the site can access:

- Interactive learning and self-management modules for adolescents with chronic pain.
- Online resources that promote self-management to help people to retrain their brain's response to chronic pain.

- Inspirational videos of old and young people sharing their experience of how adopting an evidence-based approach to pain changed their lives.
- Practical tools and resources to help people with chronic pain improve daily sleep and mood; guidance on the role of medication and a healthy lifestyle.
- A toolkit for health professionals that includes: assessment and management tools for doctors and professionals working in the community, factsheets for patients and information on NSW Pain Clinics.

The ACI and Ministry of Health have also partnered with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia to promote improved pain management in community pharmacies. The pain website will be advertised on repeat prescription folders in pharmacies across NSW.

Mrs Skinner said providing consumers and healthcare professionals with the latest scientific knowledge on how to tackle chronic pain is critical to improving health outcomes.

“People with chronic pain often feel isolated, either because others do not understand what they are experiencing or doubt they are really sick. An informed support network is vital to the wellbeing of those living with chronic pain,” Mrs Skinner said.

Minister for the Arts George Souris thanked the State Library of NSW for leading other libraries in an important public health initiative.

“It is important that people who do not have access to online information can find the help they need,” Mr Souris said.

“I am very pleased that this collection of books on chronic pain will be available in hard copy at libraries around the state, to help those living with pain to better understand and manage their situation,” he said.

To visit the *ACI Pain Management Network*, go to:  
[www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain](http://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/chronic-pain)

To view the NSW Government Pain Management Plan, go to  
[http://www0.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2012/pdf/nsw\\_pain\\_management\\_plan\\_.pdf](http://www0.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2012/pdf/nsw_pain_management_plan_.pdf)

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