



**Carmel Tebbutt MP**  
**Minister for Health**  
**Deputy Premier**

media release

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## **Caring Together: key appointments to new Bureau of Health Information**

NSW Minister for Health, Carmel Tebbutt, has announced the selection of a Chief Executive and Chairperson for the new Bureau of Health Information.

Ms Tebbutt said she was delighted to announce the new appointments as they were a key step in meeting the Government's commitment to providing an independent and transparent system of reporting the quality, performance and effectiveness of NSW health services.

"The Bureau of Health Information is a major initiative of the NSW Government's Caring Together: The Health Action Plan for NSW and has been developed in line with a recommendation from the Garling Report," Ms Tebbutt said.

"The Bureau will provide independent reports to government and the community, and will also provide doctors and nurses with information to enable them to compare the performance of their services in providing quality care to their patients.

"I am pleased that Professor Bruce Armstrong has accepted the invitation to become Chairman of the Bureau Board, and following the advice of an independent selection committee, the appointment of Dr Diane Watson to the position of Chief Executive."

Dr Watson, an internationally renowned public health adviser and senior scientist, has a strong track record in the collection and provision of publicly available information and reports on health care to inform clinicians and the community.

As the Director of Research and Analysis of the Health Council of Canada, she played a key role in the development and publication of public reports to Canadians on their health and health care services.

A member of the Order of Australia, Professor Armstrong has a wealth of experience in academia and research, and is a Professor of Public Health at the University of Sydney.

Ms Tebbutt said she was confident that with their extensive experience and contribution to public health, both Professor Armstrong and Dr Watson would be crucial elements in guiding the growth and success of this new independent health data bureau.

"Dr Watson has an impressive background in health service information analysis and reporting, and brings to the chief executive role a thorough knowledge of the facilitation of effective strategic change in health care through high quality, credible and independent reporting to clinicians, the community and to government," Ms Tebbutt said.

"Professor Armstrong has had a long association with public health, not only in his outstanding academic achievements, but also in his work with the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and the NSW Cancer Council," she said.

The selection committee for this position, chaired by Professor Armstrong, interviewed applicants from Australia, New Zealand, the UK and North America.

The functions of the new Bureau of Health Information will include:

- production of regular reports on the performance of the NSW health system, including access to services, safety and quality, clinical effectiveness and efficiency;

- development and distribution of tools to allow users to interrogate data; and
- development of new measurements to provide more comprehensive feedback on patient care; including the outcome and appropriateness of treatment, the safety and quality of clinical care and the costs associated with the care provided.

The Bureau of Health Information will be an independent statutory body, created under the Health Services Act 1997.

Ms Tebbutt said the Bureau would greatly enhance both the breadth and depth of information available to clinicians and community.

“Just as the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research has done, the Bureau of Health Information will be an independent and trusted source of information, focussing attention on what the numbers and the information are telling us, instead of an argument about the accuracy of the numbers,” she said.

Dr Watson will be relocating from Canada to take up her appointment as Chief Executive in October.

For a range of health information, go online to [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)