



New South Wales

# Health Services Amendment (Right to Primary Health Care) Bill 2026

## Explanatory note

This explanatory note relates to this Bill as introduced into Parliament.

## Overview of Bill

The object of this Bill is to amend the *Health Services Act 1997* (the *HS Act*) to provide for the provision of appropriate and timely primary health care services in rural and regional areas by local health districts.

## Outline of provisions

**Clause 1** sets out the name, also called the short title, of the proposed Act.

**Clause 2** provides for the commencement of the proposed Act on the date of assent to the proposed Act.

## Schedule 1 Amendment of Health Services Act 1997 No 154

**Schedule 1[1] and [2]** amend the HS Act, section 10 to provide that it is a function of a local health district generally to ensure residents of the areas of rural and regional local health districts have appropriate and timely access to in-person primary health care services.

The amendments also provide that, in determining whether appropriate and timely access to an in-person primary health care service is accessible, regard must be had to the following—

- (a) whether the service is accessible within a 2-hour drive of a resident's home,
- (b) whether public transport services are available to a resident of the local health district's area to transport the resident to and from the service.

**Schedule 1[3]** amends the HS Act, Dictionary to define *rural and regional local health district*.

**Schedule 1[4]** amends the HS Act, Dictionary to give a meaning to the term primary health care service.



New South Wales

# Health Services Amendment (Right to Primary Health Care) Bill 2026

## Contents

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		Page
	1 Name of Act	2
	2 Commencement	2
<b>Schedule 1</b>	<b>Amendment of Health Services Act 1997 No 154</b>	<b>3</b>

*This PUBLIC BILL, originated in the LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY and, having this day passed, is now ready for presentation to the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL for its concurrence.*

*Legislative Assembly*

*Clerk of the Legislative Assembly*



New South Wales

## **Health Services Amendment (Right to Primary Health Care) Bill 2026**

No. \_\_\_\_\_, 2026

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### **A Bill for**

An Act to amend the *Health Services Act 1997* to provide for the provision of appropriate and timely primary health care services in rural and regional areas by local health districts; and for related purposes.

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*The LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL has this day agreed to this Bill with/without amendment.*

*Legislative Council*

*Clerk of the Parliaments*

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**Tabling copy**

**The Legislature of New South Wales enacts—**

1

**1 Name of Act**

2

This Act is the *Health Services Amendment (Right to Primary Health Care) Act 2026*.

3

4

**2 Commencement**

5

This Act commences on the date of assent to this Act.

6

<b>Schedule 1</b>	<b>Amendment of Health Services Act 1997 No 154</b>	1
<b>[1] Section 10 Functions of local health districts</b>		2
Insert after section 10(b)—		3
(b1) generally to ensure residents of the areas of rural and regional local health districts have appropriate and timely access to in-person primary health care services,		4 5 6
<b>[2] Section 10(2)</b>		7
Insert at the end of section 10—		8
(2) For subsection (1)(b1), in determining whether appropriate and timely access to an in-person primary health care service is accessible, regard must be had to the following—		9 10 11
(a) whether the service is accessible within a 2-hour drive of a resident's home,		12 13
(b) whether public transport services are available to a resident of the local health district's area to transport the resident to and from the service.		14 15
<b>[3] Dictionary</b>		16
Insert in alphabetical order in Part 1—		17
<i>rural and regional local health district</i> means a local health district other than the following—		18 19
(a) Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District,		20
(b) Northern Sydney Local Health District,		21
(c) South Eastern Sydney Local Health District,		22
(d) South Western Sydney Local Health District,		23
(e) Sydney Local Health District,		24
(f) Western Sydney Local Health District.		25

<b>[4] Dictionary, Part 2</b>	1
Insert after clause 3—	2
<b>4 References to primary health care service</b>	3
(1) A reference in this Act to a primary health care service means an essential health care service generally delivered to a patient at the first point of contact with the health system.	4 5 6
(2) Primary health care services include health promotion, disease prevention, early intervention, treatment of common conditions and ongoing management of chronic illness.	7 8 9
(3) Primary health care services are generally provided through general practitioners, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, allied health professionals and Aboriginal health workers in community-based settings.	10 11 12
(4) A primary health care service is person-centred and integrated with other health and social services to support continuity of care and improve population health outcomes.	13 14 15