

The Hon Rose Jackson MLC

Minister for Water, Minister for Housing,
Minister for Homelessness
Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Youth,
Minister for the North Coast



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Your Reference: D24/041318

Ms Helen Minnican
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament of NSW
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

By email: laclerk@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Minnican

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Legislative Assembly Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health's report, *The implementation of Portfolio Committee No. 2 recommendations relating to workforce issues, workplace culture and funding considerations for remote, rural and regional health* (the report).

As the Minister for Housing, I acknowledge there are opportunities to improve efficiencies in health services and specialist care in remote, rural and regional NSW. Attracting, retaining and recruiting key health staff to outside-metropolitan areas makes sure communities have access to a high standard of care. One way of ensuring this is by making sure key workers have quality housing.

Recommendation 5 in the report instructs NSW Health to collaborate with local government and the NSW Land and Housing Corporation, now Homes NSW, to ensure there is adequate housing for current and future health workers in remote, rural, and regional NSW.

Homes NSW and NSW Health have an existing relationship through the Key Worker Housing (KWH) program. The aim of KWH is to provide quality and affordable accommodation to key workers. The intent of this is to attract and retain workers in remote, rural and regional areas, removing housing as a barrier.

In addition to the delivery of new teacher and police homes, the KWH program is also working on a centralised operating model that will deliver the best use of government housing assets and provide a more consistent tenant experience.

NSW Health manages approximately 990 homes through the Health Worker Accommodation Program. In the 2024-25 Budget, the NSW Government invested \$200.1m in NSW Health to build 120 extra homes for health workers in the regions. This will help address gaps in the existing portfolio and upgrade more homes for more use.

NSW Health is actively collaborating with Homes NSW to deliver these homes through coordinated planning, procurement, and shared governance.

In addition to building and upgrading more homes, the KWH program is also looking at how operating model changes could deliver more homes overall, more types of homes, and support more kinds of key workers – beyond teachers, police and health workers.

The collaboration between NSW Health and Homes NSW, along with the identification of opportunities to broaden cross-agency partnerships will deliver more key worker housing, benefitting communities in remote, rural and regional NSW.

Yours sincerely



Rose Jackson MLC

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