



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health

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MEDIA RELEASE

Committee publishes first report into healthcare care in remote, rural and regional NSW

Is healthcare in remote, rural and regional NSW getting any better? A recently tabled report has found that while work is in progress to address a number of issues faced by people living in these areas, much remains to be done.

"NSW Health has been working hard to deliver much needed reforms in this space." Committee Chair, Dr Joe McGirr MP said. "During this inquiry the Committee has seen their dedicated efforts to deliver better outcomes for the rural and regional communities that access their services. Despite these efforts, regional healthcare in NSW is the worst it's been for many years, in a number of key areas."

The Legislative Assembly's Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health has tabled its first report. The report examines what has been done in the last two years to improve the health workforce, workplace culture and funding for programs and services in the regional health system.

"I'm pleased to announce the tabling of the Committee's report from this important inquiry" Committee Chair, Dr Joe McGirr MP said. "This inquiry goes to heart of the serious issues that our regional and remote communities face when accessing the healthcare they need".

The report explores how rural general practice is in crisis, rural hospitals are relying on expensive short-term locum doctors and agency staff, and health staff are being overstretched by poor working conditions, inadequate pay and toxic work environments.

The report makes recommendations on how key responses to a 2022 upper house inquiry should be implemented, including:

- modifying the implementation of new worker incentive schemes
- working with the Commonwealth government to address the crisis in primary care
- taking action to reduce the reliance on locum and agency staff
- ensuring there is greater transparency when health funding models are reviewed
- addressing workplace culture issues with greater urgency.

The full report is available on the [Committee's website](#). The Select Committee's role is to make sure that recent health reforms are implemented. Their work follows from a landmark inquiry into the state of regional healthcare in 2022, when Portfolio Committee No. 2 (Legislative Council) [handed down 44 crucial recommendations](#) for reform.

This report focuses on the recommendations relating to the healthcare workforce, workplace culture, and funding in the regional health system, and will be the first of several that will be handed down by the Committee over the next year. A second inquiry that examines progress on recommendations relating to specialist care and specific health services is underway.

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