

What could be done to better improve communication between Hunter New England Health District Management, local hospitals, medical professionals and the community of the Hunter New England Health District?

I fear that HNEHDS may be perceived as an entity somewhat detached from the general public.

I draw the Committee's attention to the August 2025 edition of 'The Gwydir News'. This is a free- to-read monthly publication available online at

gwydirnews@cci.nsw.edu.au or in hard copy at local outlets. You will see HNEHDS mentioned on page 3.

I think there is scope for HNEHDS to contribute a regular column, which displays interest in reaching out to people and communities, in Gwydir News and similar publications. The columns should be familial and approachable; informative and helpful. Community radio stations also offer possible outlets where pertinent and relaxed interviews are possible.

Examples of subjects covered could include:

- *Introduction of Board members and Managerial Staff with some biographical information.
- *Stories such as how telehealth was introduced and the benefits it brings, including stroke management, training and staff upskilling.
- *Plans for other innovations and hopes for the future.
- *Timely reminders from Specialists of the importance of vaccinations and herd immunity; heat wave issues; snake bite treatment; quad bike issues; sleep disorders; checking for glaucoma and other eye issues etc.
- *Major contributions by community groups with examples from other Districts or elsewhere.
- *Recognition of long serving hospital staff and medical practitioners.
- *Acknowledgement of advisory committees, which should be widely representative and prepared to listen to matters of concern if reasonably presented.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Do you think that there should be more than two board members representing the New England/ Narrabri part of the HNEDHS and could this be achieved by adding an extra position? What are the merits of potentially doing this?

Yes and yes.

New England/Narrabri parts of HNEDHS have within them regions which are geographically, demographically and economically diverse.

My particular interest is in the maintenance of services to small communities. It would be worthwhile to consider the appointment to monitor/represent such communities and perhaps foster connections and learning experiences both between their health services and with management of HNEHD.

I think it likely that if these small communities are well serviced, they will attract growing numbers of people wanting space, contact with the land and community involvement. This "big picture" vision is in the national interest. Being post covid and house prices escalating elsewhere, are already framing this direction.

With the District headquarters in Newcastle, is there a risk of bias in recruitment with a focus on ensuring medical professionals are recruited for Newcastle and the remainder of the district is deprioritized ?

1 Access to super specialists through telehealth and/or rapid transfer to John Hunter is considerable compensation.

2 The recruiting process should make it clear that there are obligations to the full District.