

**Supplementary
Submission
No 32a**

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE No. 2
RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE DELIVERY OF SPECIFIC HEALTH
SERVICES AND SPECIALIST CARE IN REMOTE, RURAL AND REGIONAL NSW**

Organisation: Can Assist (Cancer Assistance Network)

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The implementation of Portfolio Committee No. 2 recommendations relating to the delivery of specific health services and specialist care in remote, rural and regional NSW

Hearings held at Orange - Opening Statement from Can Assist Forbes

I am the treasurer of the Forbes branch of Can Assist and have been for 23 years now. Forbes was the first branch to be opened in NSW in January 1956 and there are now 56 branches throughout the state.

Our income comes from fundraising and donations and so far, this financial year we have provided about \$55,500 in patient assistance to our local people. Our biggest expenditure is travel and accommodation.

Fortunately, Forbes residents are eligible to claim IPTAAS being over the 100km from Orange. Whilst I acknowledge IPTAAS has improved significantly in recent years and we are very thankful, particularly for the increase in subsidies. We would also however like to see ongoing refinement of that policy and application process, especially reducing the distance eligibility for small towns which are approximately 70km to 80 km from a health service.

I would Also urge the government to consider the current community transport offering. Easily accessible and affordable transportation is critical for us and community transport is vital for accessing treatment. Whilst community transport from Forbes is affordable at present, there are great variations across the state and this cost is beginning to be a worry for our area too as volunteer drivers retire. Lack of availability of seats is also a problem and patients are missing appointments.

Lastly – the problem of bringing doctors to Forbes according to my GP is the worst it has been for 25 years ; it is not unusual to wait a month for an appointment. We desperately need help.

Maureen Field
Can Assist Forbes