

**Submission
No 53**

**INQUIRY INTO HEALTH OUTCOMES AND ACCESS TO
HEALTH AND HOSPITAL SERVICES IN RURAL,
REGIONAL AND REMOTE NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Mr Andrew Kemeny

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I wish to address Terms of Reference item 1 (d) patient experience, wait-times and quality of care in rural, regional and remote NSW and how it compares to metropolitan NSW.

I have been a resident of Lightning Ridge for over a decade having relocated here from the Gold Coast. Due to the prevalence of locums attending our local medical centre, for anything other than simple cold or minor infection, I have travelled back to the Gold Coast to see my family doctor whom I have known for over 20 years.

The sad fact of living in this small community is that there is no permanent doctor(s) with whom I could form a relationship. The benefit of permanency is that over time the medical professional becomes familiar with their patient and this leads to (a) greater honesty between the parties, (b) the patient feeling more at ease and not having to provide a full history each time they attend the clinic, as they see the same face, (c) reduction in diagnosis error as the patient may inadvertently forget some relevant background fact and (d) encourage the patient to attend more frequently because of the relationship that has developed.

There are very significant monies and other benefits afforded to locums to attend the bush. I am not aware of whether the same financial incentives are made available for permanent residency in a country town?

I still attend my Gold Coast doctor on occasion in order to discuss historical issues affecting my health because I trust his judgement and know we have a history. I have endeavoured to form the same relationship with a couple of our local doctors only for them to move away and I am required to start again.

Whilst technically the quality of care should be the same, I am of the opinion that because it is impossible to form a bond with the local GP, some of the consultations I have been part of have been 'tick and flick' scenarios where we are somewhat guessing at a solution.

I urge the committee to investigate how it may be possible to encourage GP's to relocate to the bush, become part of communities and enjoy the rural lifestyle. I believe the outcomes for many individuals will benefit from this.