

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
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Partially  
Confidential

I live Wee Waa, NSW with my two young children along with being pregnant with our third, and my fiancé. Over the last 3 years the drop in medical facilities in Wee Waa has been outrageous.

My first experience with the declining facilities in Wee Waa was in 2018 when I attended the Wee Waa Hospital with my daughter. I called ahead knowing that our local doctor, , no longer attends the hospital due to issues unknown to me and there was occasionally a locum available on weekends. From this call I was told that the Doctor would be arriving at a certain time. I attended the hospital and my daughter was seen to by the nurses on duty. We waited, and waited, and waited for Doctor to arrive. While I realise that waiting can be quite common in EDs it should be noted that at this time that there wasn't any other patients waiting to be seen and the doctor was simply not turning up. Once he did I heard him remark from the nurses' station that I must be a first time mother and this was why I had brought my daughter to the hospital. This remark was incredibly unprofessional as was his lack of urgency in attending the hospital.

We have also suffered with the lack of doctor services. Doctor is only available in Wee Waa from Monday to Thursday lunchtime and sees patients one week and the following does Telehealth. When he is doing Telehealth he is unavailable to take appointments. At one point we had 3 working doctors. It is ridiculous to think that one town can be serviced with these facilities.

Doctor also stopped attending our local hospital circa 2017 for reasons unknown to me as previously mentioned. This means the population of Wee Waa and the outlying areas are no longer able to attend the hospital (unless a locum is available on the weekend. Please note that this is the only time a locum is available. There is not one during the week) for any kind of emergency treatment e.g. stitches, minor injuries, general treatment for the ill. We also can't be admitted to hospital and receive any kind of care. I experienced this first hand when my 1 year old son was unwell. Rather than attend Wee Waa Hospital I travelled 40 kilometres with him to Narrabri. Upon arrival and being triaged I was told that the best decision I had made was to come to Narrabri rather than Wee Waa. This was reiterated by staff at the Tamworth Base Hospital when he was transferred there that night.

As I have mentioned I am currently pregnant with our third child. During my two previous pregnancies a midwife clinic has been offered at the Wee Waa Hospital every second Tuesday with 1 or 2 midwives visiting from Narrabri Hospital. I have taken part in this with both pregnancies and found that this programme has been wonderful. The midwives discuss much different information than the GP does and are thorough with testing for problems which can occur within pregnancy such a pre-eclampsia. The clinic in Wee Waa and any other areas that it serviced, besides Narrabri, has been shut down due to staffing issues. This is a huge loss for any pregnant woman in Wee Waa of which there are many. While the clinic is still going in Narrabri it's unreasonable to think that the pregnant women should have to make an 80 kilometre round trip to attend it particularly when many work and/or already have children.

While I realise that this might not be exactly what you are looking for in your submissions I hope that it brings attention to the facilities that are declining and have been lost in Wee Waa. It is unreasonable to think that this is justifiable simply because we are rural.