

**Submission
No 189**

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

Name: Mrs Christie Germon
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I live in Cobar, and have had to travel many times for medical care. There have been many occasions where I could not get a GP appointment for several weeks, and the local pharmacy has been unable to order in prescription medications so I've had to travel to have those prescriptions filled as well.

In recent years, I have undergone IVF treatment which required several trips from Cobar to Newcastle, plus trips from Cobar to Dubbo every other day for follicle scans which are not available in Cobar and blood tests which needed an urgent result (i.e. not the next day or day after if we use the pathology collection centre in Cobar).

When I did eventually get pregnant, all scans were in Dubbo as at that time there was no visiting sonographer (even now, he visits once a month so if the timing doesn't work out, you still have to travel, and since his machines are portable they are often not clear enough). We are lucky enough to have a midwife in Cobar for prenatal checks, and she does a wonderful job, but due to IVF I was considered high risk and so I had to attend the pregnancy clinic at Dubbo, weekly toward the end of my pregnancy. Then of course we had to leave town two weeks before the due date to await bub's arrival since there are no birthing facilities here - two weeks of motel bills are expensive! Macquarie Home Stay was not available for us as it has limited spaces and was booked up already.

I wanted to give birth in Griffith but was told they could not plan for my birth there as they have a BMI cutoff. Mind you, I was told this after driving over from Cobar for the booking in process! Another 700km of driving, for literally no reason.

IPTAAS is good, but it doesn't cover all costs, least of all time off from work. It's unfair that we have to have either subpar service locally as doctors don't want to live here, or travel thousands of kilometres for appointments that our city counterparts can do before work or on a lunch break. Something needs to be done!