

Submission
No 277

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

Organisation: Name suppressed
Date Received: 13 December 2020

Partially
Confidential

Have your say about local health services

Bonalbo MPS part of NNSWLHD

1. There is not enough Staff either onsite or visiting health professionals.
 - Medical cover is inadequate with one great Doctor supplying **part time service** for the local towns of Old Bonalbo, Bonalbo, Tabulam and many people from Drake, Mallanganee and hinterland of rural properties, and low-income settlers on small rural blocks.
 - Nursing cover is under pressure with cumbersome recruitment practices. Nursing staff needs to be highly skilled to deal with both Emergency Department , when there is no Dr onsite and the MPs residents.
 - Visiting staff tend to be adhoc due to lack of relievers and specific target groups prioritized e.g. post op. People with chronic illness and complex needs are expected to travel 70-100+ KM to access private or public allied health. Often this is impossible for the ill person due to our poor roads and lack of public transport links. Often the partners or careers of these people have their own health issues.
2. We have access to quality health services in some respects both locally and at Lismore Base Hospital for urgent acute issues , although there are frequently issues of delay in availability and appropriate timely transport. I believe there is a gap in diagnostic and holistic care for the complex multisystem issues / subtle development of chronic illness . It is as if the system does not recognize early identification and intervention in representations of people. Preventative and thorough mental health interventions are virtually nonexistent especially youth services.
3. Indigenous people have access to appropriate culturally based primary care services and local health workers try to assist in mainstream services , access and ongoing care flexibility remains a problem . CALD people have the interpreter services but I believe real communication difficulties arise if they are alone and unwell.
4. As previously mentioned, travel for ill people is very difficult. Availability of competent drivers to enable access is a real problem. Some of the issues are, poor road conditions (narrow roads and uneven surfaces makes travel painful and uncomfortable , travel at night is risky with poor vision and wildlife e.g. Kangaroos and cattle on the road. Parking on arrival in Lismore is complex especially if you are the career driver. People must spend the whole day to get to and from an appointment and it happens frequently that cancellations occur when the person is mid journey or that appointments are scheduled early or late in the day making travel more difficult.