

Submission
No 312

**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

It deeply saddens me that my family, my children and myself will go through life without immediate access to health and care that all Australians are deserving of. The fact that our town does not have a doctor living locally and working at our hospital undermines all the good intentions of the introduction of Medicare to our country.

Just recently my 8 week old baby was passing blood in their stool. As a first time mother I was distraught, I had no understanding or knowledge of the complexity of this issue. I attended my local hospital to wait for 1.5 hours to have a doctor Telehealth appointment. This doctor was not personable across the screen and didn't make me feel as though my concerns were being validated. They took a sample and decided to await results. I then had to continuously phone my local GP which has a 6 week wait for appointments to see if the results had come in. This is unacceptable. My family living in metropolitan New South Wales are able to get into their doctor straight away. Imagine the damage that is being done to all rural first time mums mentally because of the lack of support and services.

Just recently I took my daughter again at 5 months to the hospital due to breathing difficulties. Again I waited for 1.5 hours to be called by a doctor in Dubbo via telehealth. Again the doctor doesn't know me or my family, she will likely never see me again. How is this continuity of care? How are families and medical personnel meant to develop relationships if they see each other once. I was more trusting of the advice of the local nurses than this doctor on a screen. How sad that this is what our world has come to, all because we choose to grow the food for the city people, our families and livelihoods should suffer.

I know a family who has recently moved to a bigger city centre after decades of their family being on the same property due to a member of their family requiring regular access to a doctor and medical staff. Why can't they continue on living and working the land that their families were given during the soldier settler block period?

Another issue I know has come from the fact that our town has lost a doctor is that now our local nurses don't want to work the shifts at our hospital due to accountability because there is no doctor. They have mentioned that no amount of money is worth being responsible when they are not trained at the level of doctors. Why are these nurses being made to feel this way by their department?! This is appalling and if this was happening in any other industry, the unions would be going to the highest level to abolish this ridiculous ruling!

Please for the sake of our rural communities health and wellbeing, give us back our doctors! This is ridiculous!! How would you like it if your child or your parent needed a doctor and you had to wait 6 weeks? You should be ashamed of yourselves to say that you put your hand up to be in parliament and fight for what is right for our country's people, yet somehow this stupidity and nonsense has occurred. Shame on you.