

**Submission
No 377**

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

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As a long term resident of Gulgong who was born in the old Gulgong hospital, I was sceptical of claims that the closure of this hospital and its replacement with an MPS would not result in a reduction in health services.

Unfortunately, this scepticism proved to be valid when the VMO at the Gulgong MPS was replaced with a "virtual" doctor once conditions for the continued employment for the VMO became unacceptable. A number of unsatisfactory and disastrous outcomes at Gulgong MPS demonstrated that a virtual doctor is no substitute for a resident doctor. It was only through the exposure of these incidents and the dedicated efforts of members of the Gulgong community that a VMO was reinstated.

Gulgong is not alone in trying to maintain adequate health services. Many country towns have seen an erosion of their health services with tragic consequences. The solution to these tragedies is not to employ cover up tactics; rather it is to invest in proper funding of health services in country NSW so that all residents of NSW, both country and city, can expect and receive their basic right to adequate medical care.