

**Supplementary
Submission
No 227a**

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

Name: Mr Graeme (Mick) McLeod

Date Received: 19 January 2021

Addendum to Submission.

Since making my previous submission to the Rural Health Survey (Dec 9 2020) the situation in this community has worsened considerably. Our remaining Doctor announced (apparently via facebook) that she would not be returning to her Coolah Practice after the New Year.

In the final weeks of her practice in Coolah it was evident that she was stressed by the additional load she had had forced on her by the departure of our previous Doctor and VMO. As you will see in the initial submission this was a consequence of poor administration by RaRMS on behalf of Health NSW. The knock on effect has not only been the loss of that Doctor but now both our Doctors.

This is a disaster for our local community of around 1300 people, many of them aged. There is no public transport, so travelling to distant medical services 100km or more away is difficult and expensive. It means our recently refurbished Hospital is without a Medical practitioner, as is the attached Aged Care Facility. This is totally unsatisfactory, and yet another example of neglect of Rural Communities.

It will have further ramifications as well. Our Pharmacist will most certainly lose business as patients travel to distant Doctors in larger towns will also likely get the prescriptions in those centres as well. Will this lead to a loss of our Pharmacy, another vital cog in a community's resilience?.

In recent years Coolah has become a Retirement Destination for those seeking a quieter life from larger Urban centres. These people have added much to our community, but they are now fearful they have made a mistake as we look to lose vital services. If Governments are really concerned to provide alternative lives to the Metropolitan areas, health services is one of the keys.