

**Submission
No 588**

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

Name: Mr Gavin Matheson

Date Received: 15 January 2021

Hi,

I would like to make a submission in regard to the current state and accessibility to Health Professionals within rural and remote regions.

I am 46 years of age and come from a very large family who resided in the Gunnedah/Muswellbrook regions.

During my childhood it was considered normal to have a regular doctor who knew you and was well informed of medical history through the years of development into adulthood. Unfortunately, since the retirement of baby boomers, all areas (especially remote/rural) of health care have suffered extensively. There are physically not enough Practitioners & Nursing professionals coming into the system willing to do the remote appointments or fill gaps within the health system. This is not about career choice, rather staff volumes and health system structure.

Simple math would determine the annual health professional intake each year (minus persons exiting the system each year) would not service the volume of population growth each year.

After hour services are being utilised excessively due to the fact that medical practices are booked out at minimum 1 month in advance. Due to this, Triage and waiting times have grown exponentially with a minimum waiting time of 2-4 hours to see a professional after hours at hospital emergencies.

This is impacting staff efficiencies due to the volume of attendees resulting in less than acceptable care and responses.

This has become a frustrating issue for all with no clear direction or plan in place.

We as a country have been considerably lucky with the COVID19 impacts in respect to the rest of the world.

In saying that, if Australia did get impacted with the volume of care required to meet and treat cases like the UK, we would have been doomed.....There is not enough diversity within the health system to appoint specialists, facilitate services, skill to meet new techniques, care for the elderly and terminal etc etc the list goes on.

We are losing compassion for the wellbeing of genuine health care needs and services.

I hope change can be established as I am terrified as to what my children will experience when they are my age. Maybe no Health System at all just private operators that will service based on ability to personally cover the cost.....It's scary as it seems we are going backwards.

Thanks,

Gavin Matheson