

**Submission
No 713**

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

Name: Ms Marcia Howes

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Mrs Helen Dalton, MP
104-110 Banna Avenue
Griffith NSW 2680

To whom it may concern,

We would like to please consider this submission to the upper house inquiry for review into some of the issues facing rural hospitals in MLHD, in particular Tocumwal MPS facility.

I would like to highlight the main concerns for you to review please:

1. Registered Nurse Staffing crisis: currently only have 2 full time RNs and 1 partime RN to cover 21 shifts a week, of which they can only cover 13 shifts. We then rely on agency staff and very limited casual RNs, who mostly work across other hospitals mostly in Shepparton, Victoria. This means if one RN needs to take sickleave, we either have to move to 12hr shifts or do overtime, meaning a double shift, which is extremely dangerous for fulltime nurses to be working 16hour shifts on top of normal hours.
2. Very limited availability to agency staff that are qualified, as they need to have Emergency experience, plus access to agency staff is extremely difficult with border closures due to covid 19, or nurses being utilized for other roles such as vaccination hubs, causing a massive decrease in availability to staff hospitals.
3. Tocumwal only has one manager currently, yet other sites in MLHD, such as Culcairn and Holbrook, which have the same staffing as Tocumwal and beds, with similar activity, yet those sites have a deputy manager aswell.
4. Recruitment in MLHD takers a very long time to process adding pressure to sites awaiting staff that have been approved but not processed.
5. Graduate nurses not having access to fulltime Clinical Nurse Educator to enable them to learn the roles.
6. Reliant on a virtual medical service currently with the Remote Medical Consultation Service, which can at times be overwhelmed with patients requiring assessment, taking time to get patients reviewed in Emergency.

Sincerely,

Marcia Howes
NSWNA representative