

Submission
No 22

**INQUIRY INTO VETERINARY WORKFORCE SHORTAGE
IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Miss Mary Anderson

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hello there,

I would definitely back any inquiry into why there is such a shortage of vets and how this issue can be resolved.

I live in regional southwest NSW and my only vet is 40kms away and there is not always a vet available during normal working hours, Saturdays and nothing after hours. This is super critical in the summer months when brown snakes are prevalent everywhere around where I live (on a rural property). This means that if my dog gets bitten there is a high chance that I will not make it to the vet in time to even start treatment. And if this was to happen after 6pm, then all I can do is watch my dog die.

This is also a fundamental issue when it comes to trying to save Australian's native wildlife which I have had to do several times. Birds, turtles, kangaroos, lizards, etc. all run the risk of dying as there is no medical care for them and not even WIRES has someone local who can come and help. And even these groups face the challenges to find vets who are experienced and trained in providing care for these precious native animals once injured animals are in their care.

And it is not just a problem with availability but I know from my local vet, an increasing number of pet owners cannot afford to pay for veterinary care for their beloved companions. I understand that the Animal Justice Party has been advocating for Veticare to make vet-care affordable and accessible for all as it is for humans and I hope that the Government takes this on board.

I also understand from the AJP that Council pounds and other rescue groups have also been affected by the vet shortage, with many finding it difficult to secure veterinarians to care for sick and injured animals, as well as de-sex and microchip animals for rehoming.

Veterinary treatment should not be a privilege for those who live in cities or large towns but available for all. But then this is also a problem for human health care where I live too but at least there are always options of some sort or another. For animals, there is almost nothing.

The whole system is broken and something must be done to rectify the situation as soon as possible so I am pleased that the NSW Government is now taking this issue seriously. I just hope that something genuinely effective comes out of this and it is not just another issue that gets discussed with no resolution achieved.

Thank you.