

**Submission  
No 76**

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

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## NSW Parliamentary Enquiry into NSW Veterinary Workforce Shortage

I am a specialist Veterinary Clinical Pathologist working at the University of Sydney.

Veterinary Pathologists are an important part of the veterinary industry with many roles including supporting Veterinarians in diagnosing and managing disease, in detection and control of endemic and emergency animal diseases, in wildlife health and conservation, and public health.

There is a nationwide shortage of specialist veterinary pathologists in both anatomic pathology and clinical pathology disciplines due to a long-term significant deficit in training opportunities throughout the country. Qualified veterinarians are required to undertake a 3-4 year post graduate training program to develop the required skills and experience in pathology, and then pass specialist examinations. In NSW there are currently only 2 specialist training positions per year which is insufficient to meet current and future industry requirements. The lack of specialist veterinary pathologists compromises our emergency disease readiness.

To increase the pathology training capacity of NSW Universities by at least 50% to meet current and future demand the following is required:

- NSW State Government funding of scholarships for pathology training residency positions at the University of Sydney and Charles Sturt University in anatomic and clinical pathology. These scholarships would cover tuition fees and provide a student stipend for the training period as well as funds for externship training and conference attendance.
- Long term Government and Industry funding of a national collaborative pathology training resource to allow a coordinated approach to training across Australia, sharing expertise and training resources such as case material to ensure trainees are given the required breadth of experience and making optimal use of the current limited pool of specialists able to provide training.

I would be very happy to further discuss the current situation and requirements.

Associate Professor Natalie Courtman

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