



Media Release

The Hon Greg Hunt MP

Federal Member for Flinders
Minister for the Environment

Friday, 6th February 2015

Koo Wee Rup and surrounding communities get better access to Doctors

A number of communities in my electorate will find it easier to attract doctors following the Australian Government's announcement of a new District of Workforce Shortage (DWS) system.

I have long supported these changes and have been working for many years to ensure communities have better access to doctors locally.

Changes to the way the Australian Government identifies areas of doctor shortages will benefit the communities of Blind Bight, Cannons Creek, Tooradin, Warneet, Botanic Ridge, Clyde, Cranbourne South, Junction Village, Pearcedale, Koo Wee Rup and Lang Lang.

In particular, I have been campaigning for Koo Wee Rup to be listed as a DWS area for nearly a decade and am thrilled that this region will finally be able to secure the doctors it desperately needs.

This allows us to better identify the communities that genuinely need more doctors and to ensure local health services can attract skilled medical professionals to those areas.

We have listened to the concerns of rural doctors that the old DWS system was out of date and in desperate need of reform.

These changes mean that the most up-to-date data will be used to identify doctor shortage, which will make it easier to plan for and to recruit doctors.

Assessments will now be made yearly, rather than every three months, which will give communities greater certainty when planning health recruitment.

The changes have been developed in close consultation with rural doctors.

Any communities that lose their DWS status as a result of the reforms will not lose the doctors they already have and will be able to replace existing doctors if they leave.

These changes will help to deliver on the Government's commitment to improve the health outcomes for rural, regional and remote Australians through better access to medical services.

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