



## Stronger Rural Health Strategy – delivering high quality care

The Government is committed to improving the health of people living in rural, regional and remote Australia and will provide opportunities for Australian doctors through better teaching, training, recruitment and retention. This will deliver around 3,000 additional specialist GPs for rural Australia, over 3,000 additional nurses in rural general practice and hundreds of additional allied health professionals in rural Australia over 10 years.

### Teaching

- A Murray–Darling Medical Schools Network will be established to provide end to end teaching in rural locations.
- Curtin University and La Trobe University will be included in the Rural Health Multidisciplinary Training program to improve rural undergraduate training.

### Training

- Under the More Doctors for Rural Australia Program, Australian trained doctors will be able to undertake private practice in rural and remote areas, billing through Medicare.
  - Training arrangements will be streamlined for non-vocationally recognised GPs, with funding to support gaining full fellowship.
- The two GP colleges – RACGP and ACRRM – will have a greater role in GP training.
- An additional 100 vocational training places to support rural generalists undertaking General Practice training from 2021 – earmarked to support the National Rural Generalist Pathway.
- Junior doctors will be supported to gain clinical experience in the private sector with an emphasis on more rural primary care settings.

### Recruitment and retention

- Improved incentives and bonding arrangements will encourage more doctors to work and stay in rural and remote areas.
- The Workforce Incentive Program will assist general practices to employ allied health professionals and support doctors to practise in non-metropolitan areas.
- Rural bulk billing incentives for general practices will be better targeted.
- The nursing workforce will be strengthened through training and support for nurses moving into general practice, and a review of current curricula.

### Why is this important?

There is an over-supply of doctors in some urban areas, and shortages in rural, regional and remote areas. Australians' increasing complex and chronic health needs require team-based and multidisciplinary primary healthcare.

### Who will benefit?

Patients across the country will benefit from improved healthcare, including access to bulk billed services, through more and higher qualified doctors, and extended outreach services.

### How much will this cost?

The Stronger Rural Health Strategy is a \$550 million investment to support improved rural health services.