



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health

27 March 2025

### MEDIA RELEASE

## Committee publishes second report on health services in remote, rural and regional NSW

Have health services and specialist care improved for communities in remote, rural and regional NSW? A recently published report found that access to some services has declined, with maternity care and mental health care now reaching a crisis point.

The second report of the Legislative Assembly's Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health was tabled in NSW Parliament this week. It examines the progress that has been made in the delivery of specific health services and specialist care since a landmark 2022 report.

"Access to timely, affordable and high quality specialist care is crucial to the health and wellbeing of remote, rural and regional communities, but we are concerned that not enough progress is being made to improve these services," said Committee Chair Dr Joe McGirr.

The report focuses on a range of specific forms of care, including maternity services and paediatrics, cancer care, aged care, palliative care, patient transport and the delivery of healthcare for Aboriginal communities.

"The Committee was particularly concerned about the closure of birthing and obstetric units in rural and regional hospitals, and escalating workforce shortages that are impacting on mental health care," Dr McGirr said.

The report makes 32 recommendations to the NSW Government, including:

- Urgent development of a statewide plan to maintain and re-establish maternity services
- Measures to address shortfalls within the obstetric and midwifery workforces, as well as gaps in rural and regional paediatric services
- Development of a long-term strategy for developing the mental health workforce
- Incentives to support the growth of the Aboriginal community-controlled health sector and Aboriginal health workforce
- Action to improve access to palliative care, and
- Supporting the expansion of the specialist paramedic workforce in remote, rural and regional areas.

The full report is available on the [Committee's website](#). The Committee was established to monitor the implementation of recommendations handed down in a landmark [2022 Legislative Council report](#). The report made 44 recommendations for rural and regional health reform, which this Committee has examined over the course of three inquiries.

The Committee's first report focused on workforce, workplace culture and funding in the regional health system. The Committee's third and final report will examine areas of health reform that require collaboration between the state and federal governments, and consultation with communities.

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