

Joint Communique

Commonwealth-NSW Bilateral Regional Health Forum

Inaugural meeting: 13 December Wagga Wagga

The inaugural Bilateral Regional Health Forum committed to working more effectively together to deliver better outcomes for rural and regional communities.

The forum, co-chaired by The Hon. Brad Hazzard MP, Minister for Health and Medical Research and The Hon. Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Services, Decentralisation and Local Government, brought together key stakeholders in NSW and Commonwealth government and non-government organisations.

It was agreed that NSW and the Commonwealth will collaborate to:

- develop regional collaborative funding models to ensure GPs, nurses and allied health staff are attracted to work and stay in regional and rural areas
- further develop training programs to support GPs and rural generalists into rural practice
- build resilience and mental health support in the regions
- develop attractive funding and employment models for doctors in training to work across hospitals and General Practice
- share and scale successful regional workforce and service initiatives.

Participants agreed to make the most of the more than \$2 billion in combined investments in mental health, workforce, and primary care in regional, rural and remote NSW.

The Ministers acknowledged the work already being done by Primary Health Networks, Local Health Districts, NSW Rural Doctors Network, and non-government organisations in building health care in the regions.

The Forum will come together twice a year to discuss important health issues which affect communities across regional NSW and report progress on the objectives of the Forum. It represents a commitment to stronger collaboration between the Commonwealth and NSW Governments to work together on the issues that matter the most to regional NSW.