

PRESS RELEASE



Country Mayors Association of NEW SOUTH WALES

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POSITIVE CHANGES PROPOSED FOR RURAL HEALTH

The Mayors of Central NSW met on Thursday 26 May 2022 for the Country Mayors Association (CMR) Rural Health Forum in Sydney.

During this meeting they discussed the recommendations of the Legislative Council report into health outcomes and access to health and hospital services in rural, regional and remote New South Wales.

The Chair of the Country Mayors Association, Cr Ken Keith OAM, the Mayor of Parkes Shire said, "We were pleased to welcome some high-caliber speakers to share their comments on a range of topics in the rural health sector. This resulted in a very successful forum outcome with a number of suggestions for positive change."

Speakers included Deputy Chairman of the Country Mayors Association, Mayor of Gunnedah Shire Council Cr Jamie Chaffey, Minister for Women, Regional Health and Mental Health The Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC, Shadow Minister for Health and Mental Health Mr Ryan Park MP and National Rural Health Commissioner Prof Ruth Stewart.

The meeting concluded with an open session and as a result 15 positive changes from the CMA were agreed upon for consideration. It was resolved that the Government will collaborate on the issue of doctor shortages in the rural health system.

Cr Ken Keith said, "We would like the Government to consider including short-term measures to improve rural health including the development of systems to maintain the retention of internees in rural areas and to get international doctors into rural communities.

"In the long term, we need to look at establishing more medical schools to train doctors in rural regions. A study from James Cook University found that 75% of doctors stayed in rural areas if they completed their internship rurally," said Cr Keith.

The CMA met the following day for their General Meeting with guests including Minister for Local Government the Hon. Wendy Tuckerman MP, Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW the Hon. Paul Toole MP and Minister for Lands and Water, The Hon Kevin Anderson MP.

Mayors across Central NSW greatly appreciated the opportunity to meet with and discuss issues with the Ministers and ask questions from their constituents.



Pictured I-R; Mayor of Gunnedah Shire Council Cr Jamie Chaffey, Minister for Local Government the Hon. Wendy Tuckerman MP, Minister for Lands and Water, The Hon Kevin Anderson MP, The Chair of the Country Mayors Association, Cr Ken Keith OAM, the Mayor of Parkes Shire and Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW the Hon. Paul Toole MP.

The End

For further information please contact Cr Ken Keith OAM 0428 669 482