

# MEDIA RELEASE

28 June 2025

## “We need to ask the doctors what will bring them to the bush”

Rural Doctors Association of Queensland (RDAQ) President Dr Danielle Allan has used her final day in the role to highlight the need for both sides of government to seek and listen to input from rural doctors around policies that directly relate to and impact them and their communities.

Issues of workforce attraction and retention to stretched rural and remote Queensland sites was high on the agenda with alternate views presented to hundreds of rural doctor delegates on the final day of RDAQ’s annual conference on the Gold Coast.

Minister for Health The Hon. Tim Nicholls MP and Shadow Minister for Health and Ambulance Services The Hon. Mark Bailey MP both addressed the full conference plenary session this morning.

“It was fantastic to have both the Government and Opposition represented here today and their willingness to discuss the tough issues with our members was greatly appreciated,” Dr Allan said.

“One of the first issues we had with the change of government was the announcement of the withdrawal of the rural Health Workforce Attraction & Incentive Scheme.

“We heard Minister Nicholls’ point of view that it was a costly measure which according to their statistics was not yielding results, but we also heard the Shadow Minister’s perspective the scheme was working, and the new government’s decision to scrap it was made too abruptly.

“We’re not saying the scheme was perfect, but we are concerned there was no alternative measure ready to go or consultation around the decision.

“Our members on the ground, prevocational doctors, and our medical students know best what will draw them to train and stay in rural medicine, and we are very pleased the lines of discussion are open for RDAQ with both sides of government.”

Minister Nicholls said the Crisafulli Government was committed to strengthening rural healthcare and communities.

“Queensland’s rural clinicians are the backbone of their communities and an integral part of what makes Queensland great, in a state where remote communities and vast distances are a fact of life.

“As we deliver on our promise to provide easier access to health services, closer to where people live, it’s imperative we partner with our rural workforce and take a place-based approach to healthcare delivery to ensure we are driving solutions that cater to individual communities and their unique needs.”

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