

MEDIA RELEASE

22 June 2024

Advocacy matters – rural doctors’ voices heard

Rural doctors from across Queensland have received a clear message from both sides of government that we are being heard and our voices matter.

Queensland Health Minister The Hon. Shannon Fentiman MP addressed hundreds of delegates at the Rural Doctors Association of Queensland’s (RDAQ) 35th Anniversary conference in Meanjin (Brisbane) this week.

The Minister announcing that Queensland health will provide a retention allowance of \$30,000 for all current Medical Practitioners with Private Practice (MPPP) from 1 July 2024.

This model is key for ensuring we have doctors in the smallest of our communities.

The Minister reaffirmed the government’s \$24 million investment to build the GP workforce, providing \$40,000 for GP trainees to support their community placements.

She acknowledged RDAQ’s advocacy for junior doctors in remote locations and committed to working on incentivising these doctors to stay rural through the Workforce Attraction Incentive Scheme.

“Rural healthcare is not just about providing medical services; it is about building communities,” Minister Fentiman said.

“The work of our rural workforce not only positively impacts the health and wellbeing of individuals but also the social and economic fabric of their communities,” she said.

“When we attract rural doctors, I want to do everything we can to keep them.

“It is not an understatement to say the initiatives I am talking to tonight have been shaped and driven by RDAQ’s tireless advocacy on behalf of their members.”

Shadow Minister for Education and for the Arts Dr Christian Rowan MP also addressed the conference, confirming the LNP’s undertaking to honour the Government’s budgeted commitments and pledging that rural maternity, workforce and infrastructure would be the key areas of focus for an LNP government.

“We have a strong focus on health workforce and investing in the Rural Generalist Pathway which we have a proud record of doing when last in government,” Dr Rowan said.

“We certainly have a plan when it comes to investing in the infrastructure that’s needed and accommodation as well and providing additional professional development support across the board.”

RDAQ President Dr Alex Dunn said having strong, bipartisan political representation at the conference helped to break down the barriers between policy makers and those on the front line and, it would help election-proof the health of rural medicine.

“RDAQ has real momentum in this space and if there was a change of government, we would seek to have good access and interaction with policy makers,” he said.

“We are respected, we are solutions-focused and we are open to listening, but are always strong advocates for our members and their communities.

“There have been some excellent gains made and we welcome the Minister’s announcements and Dr Rowan’s commitments, but we know there is still plenty of work to be done to achieve equity in healthcare for rural and remote Queenslanders.”

RDAQ2024 is being held 20 – 22 June 2024 at BCEC.

More information:

[View program](#) | conference.rdaq.com.au

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