

Roadmap to rural health

2024 Queensland election priorities


RDAQ calls on all candidates for the 2024 Queensland election to preserve every Queenslanders' right to see a doctor regardless of their postcode.

Rural and remote communities underpin the prosperity and character of Queensland, yet they face distinct health challenges that require dedicated solutions.

It requires bipartisan effort to ensure improved health outcomes are secured for our most vulnerable, remote and underserved communities across this vast state.

Our major signposts:

Let's travel together for better health by 2027

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- Fortify general practice as the pillar of rural health.**
 - Accelerate restoration of rural birthing and access to reproductive services.**
 - Support doctors to respond to rural and remote people experiencing coercive control and domestic violence.**
 - Expand rural and remote access to healthcare.**
 - Strengthen the rural health workforce.**

Read on for the important steps that will get us there.

RDAQ's Roadmap to rural health

Let's travel together for better health by 2027

1. Fortify general practice as the pillar of rural health:

- Ensure there is a door to open: Establish core funding for base primary care infrastructure to facilitate attraction of general practitioners to very small rural communities.
- Provide Ministerial commitment to rural and remote primary care being strengthened by collaborative care models, not weakened by role substitution.
- Establish formal engagement protocol between Department of Health and General Practice peak bodies to facilitate a united approach to healthcare delivery in Queensland.
- Support restoration of primary care for small towns by resourcing flexible, locally agreed medical workforce models.

2. Accelerate restoration of rural birthing and access to reproductive services:

- Empower measurable restoration plans for local sustainable birthing starting with Cooktown, Biloela and Chinchilla.
- Provide bipartisan support for collaborative maternity care, promoting a culture that is woman-centred with the collective goal of maximising women's access to the broadest range of choice as close to home and on Country as possible.
- Ensure all Queensland women and girls have access to comprehensive reproductive health care.
- Establish data analysis on the birthing and reproductive healthcare journey for rural and remote women that is transparent and informs collaboration and co-design.

3. Support responses for rural & remote people experiencing coercive control domestic violence

- Resource all parts of the health system to provide early screening, education and support for those experience coercive control and all forms of domestic violence.

4. Expand access to healthcare

- Publish planned rural health infrastructure investment with annual reporting against commitments.
- Rectify delays and inadequate reimbursements for rural patients travelling for care through urgent improvement of the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme (PTSS).
- Increase hospital bed numbers in prioritised level 3 rural hospitals and regional referral centres.
- Expand CT scanner roll out to rural facilities to enable wider service provision locally.
- Establish regional teams inclusive of rural generalists and other specialists who support rural and remote teams and local access to services.

5. Strengthen the rural health workforce:

- Address nonsensical disparities in rural health workforce incentive schemes.
- Confirm eligibility for prevocational doctors who are training in rural sites for attraction incentives when they seek permanent roles.
- Recognise rural generalists and offer parity with other specialities across attraction and retention strategies.
- Address prevocational training pathways to widen rural and primary care exposure.
- Increase supports for prevocational doctors undertaking rural training including career support, accommodation and travel packages and family support.

About RDAQ

Rural Doctors Association of Queensland (RDAQ) is a member-based not-for-profit organisation who represents rural and remote doctors and the communities they serve. We have an extensive membership across Queensland, with diverse clinical backgrounds sharing a rich collective practice wisdom.

RDAQ asserts that all Queenslanders should have access to quality healthcare close to home and on Country, provided within the community where the person resides and by people who are trusted and qualified. We are committed to advocating for improved health access and outcomes for rural and remote people.

RDAQ's Policy Platform

Read more about RDAQ's policy platform [here](#)

Rural maternity services:

The continuing crisis for rural and remote women and girls in accessing appropriate maternity and reproductive services needs urgent action to address immediate inequities and long-term strategies to ensure viability into the future. We call on all parties to commit to widen access for all Queensland women and girls.

Doctors in rural training:

There is an immediate need to redress imbalances in prevocational and ongoing training pathways, across the breadth of rural and remote contexts.

Rural and remote general practice:

Access to general practice is a pillar in healthcare. All levels of government have an obligation to ensure there is a door to open for rural and remote people.

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