



David Littleproud MP

Federal Member for Maranoa

Media Statement

December 8, 2016

Maranoa MP fights for Kingaroy reclassification in attempt to address local doctor shortage

IN AN attempt to address the GP shortage issues at Kingaroy, Federal Member for Maranoa David Littleproud is pushing for the region to be classified a District of Workforce Shortage (DWS).

“DWS is a key mechanism the Federal Government uses to achieve an equitable distribution of medical services across Australia and I believe Kingaroy should be reclassified to address GP shortage currently being felt by the community,” Mr Littleproud said.

“DWS are reviewed annually and will be looked at during February 2017 so I’ve already raised the Kingaroy region’s concerns regarding access to health services.

“I’ve been in constant contact with the community on this and understand there’s been some recent local clinic closures, that’s why I’ve taken these concerns to the Rural Health Assistant Minister Dr David Gillespie.”

Mr Littleproud said the Coalition Federal Government changed the DWS system so regions were looked at using the most recent data.

“Previously calculations were based from 2004 data but the new DWS system uses the most up-to-date data – from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) – to identify doctor shortage, making it easier to recruit doctors in the bush,” he said.

“I’m concerned by statistics which reveal a life expectancy gap between those who live in the regions compared to their city cousins.

“This life expectancy inequality is unacceptable. That’s why this Coalition Government is serious about rural health and helping to connect rural people with better health services.”

DWS FACT BOX:

- A DWS is a geographical area where the local population has less access to Medicare-subsidised medical services when compared to the national average.
- These areas are identified using the latest Medicare billing statistics latest residential population estimates as provided by the ABS.
- Updates to the DWS geography take place annually to provide greater stability and assurance to practices and other employers seeking to recruit doctors.

For more information, check out:

<http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au/internet/otd/publishing.nsf/content/dwsfactsheet>

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