



THE COUNTRY MAYORS ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

"What we want is nothing more than equity"

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Councils Seeking Answers to Growing Health Concerns

The Country Mayors Association of NSW (CMA) will host its inaugural Rural & Regional Health Forum in Wagga Wagga this Friday 15th September.

More than 70 CMA members including Mayors, Councillors and General Managers from across rural and regional NSW, will converge on NSW' largest Inland city to discuss many health related issues and hear from health leaders and politicians.

Jamie Chaffey, CMA Chairman and Mayor of Gunnedah Shire, emphasised the importance of the forum, stating that health is a crucial priority of CMA Members.

"Our membership is focused on finding solutions to the growing list of issues that are affecting the health of our communities as a top priority. Residents of rural and regional NSW, whom we represent, expect and deserve more adequate health services, regardless of where they live in NSW," Mayor Chaffey said.

"I'm sure this inaugural health forum will become an annual event to give our mayors, other councillors and general managers the opportunity to listen and engage with Federal and State MPs, along with leading health professionals and advocates," he said.

CMA Deputy Chairman and Mayor of Temora Shire, Rick Firman OAM, expressed his gratitude to the forum partners for making this important stakeholder event possible.

"Our CMA Executive and Members are very grateful to all who have helped organise this important event. We've all worked closely to ensure this forum is a success. We've been meeting regularly for months to ensure it will be as informative as possible," said Mayor Firman.

Key speakers will include The Hon Michael McCormack MP, Federal Member for Riverina; Professor Ruth Stewart, National Rural Health Commissioner and Mr. Richard Colbran CEO NSW Rural Doctors Network (RDN), among others.

“It is most important that all CMA members amplify how crucial it is that our residents – who live in remote, rural and regional NSW – have the right to equity in health services,” said Mayor Firman.

CEO of NSW Rural Doctors Network, Richard Colbran says it is important for organisations like RDN to work closely in alignment with local government to improve rural health access and the workforce.

“Local councils across the state have become increasingly involved in ensuring a stronger, more sustainable health workforce so RDN is honored to be signing a memorandum of understanding with the CMA to show its commitment to achieving better health access in regional, rural and remote NSW,” said Mr. Colbran.

“I am constantly impressed by the dedication of mayors and councils to improving health access and outcomes for their residents, especially during recent years of natural disasters, the pandemic and crippling health workforce shortages. I am sure there will be some positive recommendations and outcomes to flow from this forum, said Mr Colbran.

For further information, contact Cr Jamie Chaffey on 0467 402 412