

13 Dec. 11

Dear Senate

With respect to the supply of doctors to rural areas, I would like to state that the move away from previous classifications of rurality to the current one has resulted in small inland towns finding it almost impossible to recruit doctors.

I also feel that definitions of area of need and districts of workforce shortage are failing smaller towns and the classification procedure is too slow in terms of reflecting changes to workforce supply.

The way RTPs allocate GP registrars is also a factor, for GP registrars are an important source of workforce in small towns. Unfortunately the way RTPs allocate is not transparent enough and needs to be monitored better. Until such time as members of the boards of RTPs declare a conflict of interest when it comes to allocation, this problem will persist. No member of a board of an RTP should have a registrar in his/her practice until such time as all other practices, whose supervisors are not on the board, have been allocated registrars.

The Medicare rebates for inland small towns should be higher than for coastal towns; this would provide a massive incentive for doctors to move inland.

Yours sincerely

Dr Aniello Iannuzzi

Coonabarabran, NSW