

A photograph of a modern, single-story building with a white and light green facade, surrounded by lush green trees. The building appears to be a community or health service center.

Moura MPHS Community Advisory Group

2nd April 2022

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs
P.O Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Re: Inquiry into the provision of general practitioner and related primary health services to outer metropolitan, rural and regional Australians

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written response regarding concerns we have in relation to information delivered to the Public Hearing at Emerald on 17 March 2022.

Our concerns relate to aspects of Submission 190 and implications for recommended service delivery options with general practitioner practice management in small rural centres.

As noted in the Moura MPHS Community Advisory Group (MCAG) submission to the Inquiry our response is from a grassroots consumer/ community experience in terms of accessing GP and primary health services.

Additional context for this response includes the situation that Moura community was placed in on Friday 11 March 2022. Moura was to be without a doctor for an indefinite period of time. The community was alerted to this situation when a staff member at the hospital posted the information for the benefit of the community on Facebook.

It would have been difficult to overlook the media activity about Moura's doctor situation focusing attention on the Public Hearing for the Inquiry coming up in Emerald on the 17th March.

Since this situation occurred in Moura with no doctor available at the practice and no communication with community, we have found that the medical practice is currently being managed by Rural Health Management Services (RHMS).

It was interesting to note that representatives of RHMS made no mention at the Public Hearing of managing the Moura general practice or issues being experienced in Moura.

The experience in Moura community with RHMS managing the practice has not been positive and does not align with statements by representatives of the group at the Public Hearing in Emerald on 17 March 2022.

Evidence given by CQRH and RHMS representatives stated that RHMS works 'with' the community and achieves successful results:

- As recent managers of the Moura general practice RHMS have not worked 'with' the community as there was no communication to the community regarding the doctor situation
- The RHMS model of practice management has not been implemented in an open or transparent way with the Moura community. This has caused a high level of fear and anxiety about doctor availability and operation of the general practice, especially among young families, our elderly residents and community members with high level health needs.

We are informed that other models of service delivery exist to manage medical practices, especially in small rural towns that find themselves in a situation without a permanent doctor or without a doctor wishing to operate the practice management business:

- Medical practices, especially in small communities such as Moura can be managed through existing and established State processes in partnership with communities actively assisting with design and decision-making re healthcare services.
- It is concerning that multiple non-government organisations and businesses compete for limited healthcare funding when services can be delivered through existing processes such as the State.
- It is important that all models of practice management be considered for communities experiencing issues with recruitment and retention of general practitioners.

MCAG has a positive working relationship with our regional Hospital and Health Service. (Please find attached a brochure and information sheet that highlights how our community engages and partners with health stakeholders). MCAG continues to work with CQHHS and Board representatives and to support the current process to recruit permanent doctors for the vacant Medical Superintendent with Right to Private Practice and the Medical Officer with Right to Private Practice positions. MCAG representatives are also meeting with RHMS to address concerns with the current management of the Moura medical practice.

Thank you for your time and consideration of concerns raised with this issue of general practice management in small rural communities.

Regards

Nancy Rowe
Secretary Moura MPHS Community Advisory Group.

PARTNERSHIPS

LEADERSHIP

ENGAGEMENT

Our Success Story: Moura Community & Central Queensland Hospital & Health Service

Moura, a small rural community in Central Queensland, has a powerful story to tell about passionate grassroots engagement, partnership building and leadership. In 2013 a decision by the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service Board to turn the Moura hospital into a treat and transfer centre was overturned by community through a passionate campaign that attracted state-wide attention. A Reference Group comprising community and management of Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service (CQHSS) engaged in weekly meetings over three months to negotiate a better way forward. A contemporary and modern hospital facility was the result of this engagement. Formation of a Community Advisory Group was welcomed as an opportunity to maintain community energy and enthusiasm and to work together with government and health authorities.

Today the Moura Community Advisory Group (MCAG) partners with CQHHS to ensure the health needs of Moura and district continue to be met:

- Health consumers are now better informed, consulted and involved in shaping the way services are designed and delivered in the community.
- Increased number of consumers access services due to community assistance with advertising and promoting services.
- Tools such as the very active Facebook page 'Let's Keep Moura Hospital Open' helps keep in touch with community and provides a forum for immediate feedback on healthcare issues.

Keeping connections strong between community and health service providers has achieved positive culture change:

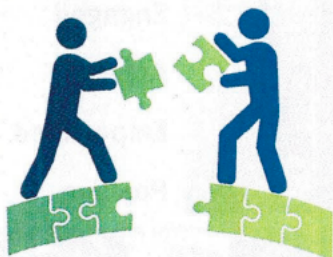
- Community members are more confident to ask questions and contribute ideas into ways that healthcare might be better delivered.
- Healthcare services are open and willing to listen to and work with community.
- There is a shared awareness and understanding of community and consumer needs and the capacity of the health service to deliver.
- Strong and inclusive leadership in community and government has fostered a spirit of trust and helpfulness.

Moura Community Advisory Group (MCAG)

Moura Community Advisory Group (MCAG) are pleased to work with our community and relevant health stakeholders to ensure that Moura and district have a strong voice in health services decision making, planning and delivery for our area.

Strengthening relationships

Community members need to be confident to ask questions and contribute ideas into ways that health care is designed and delivered. MCAG ensures there is a shared awareness and understanding of community and consumer needs and the capacity of health services to deliver.



Successful communication

MCAG listens to and involves community, keeping them informed via multiple channels such as our active Facebook page 'Let's Keep Moura Hospital Open' with over 2000 members. This medium gets immediate feedback on issues or problems that need attention. Local media championed our community hospital campaign running features and networking with regional newsrooms.

Leading change by

- Understanding consumer/ community needs
- Encouraging mutual respect and trust
- Building positive partnerships
- Safeguarding a strong community voice
- Using multiple communication channels
- Looking for opportunities
- Focusing on agreed outcomes
- Embracing innovative delivery
- Being inclusive and transparent
- Enabling shared decision making
- Celebrating success
- Sharing our story

Changing lives for the better

Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service



Moura Community Hospital

Consumer engagement
and partnerships

Keeping Connections Strong

Moura Community and Central
Queensland Hospital and Health Services

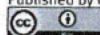
Living our values

Care Integrity Commitment Respect

Developed in partnership with Moura Community Advisory Group (MCAG) and Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service.

All information contained in this sheet has been supplied by appropriately qualified professionals. It is a guideline for care only. Seek medical advice, as appropriate, for concerns regarding your health.

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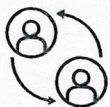
Keys to engagement



Collaboration



Innovation

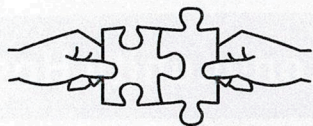


Sharing and understanding



Humility

Learning together



Helpfulness

- Be inclusive, open and transparent
- Communicate early
- Make time frames reasonable
- Listen and work together
- Mutual faith and trust

Building positive partnerships

“We are at the start of a process that is seeking to involve the community, the health service, the health service Board and the Queensland Government as equal contributors to the engagement process. The outcome of the Moura Hospital issue has potential to be seen as a benchmark for other rural communities of Queensland. We need to embrace the opportunity we have been given and ensure that Moura Hospital is Strong, Smart and Sustainable.”

Debbie Elliott

Chairperson Moura Reference Group (2013)

Grassroots engagement

Moura community has a powerful story to tell about engagement, partnership building and leadership for positive change.

Achieving change

Moura now has a contemporary and modern facility with:

- Innovative modular design
- Quick onsite build
- Capacity for easy extension

Enabling and embracing different delivery models

Public/Private Dental Service



Telehealth Services



Moura Community



Engaged

Active

Empowered

Positive



Strong Consumer Voice

Current projects

✓ *Achieved*

Multi-purpose extension for aged, respite and palliative care



✓ *Achieved*

Development of an emergency landing site

