



PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

14TH NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

I am pleased to offer my support for this year's National Rural Health Conference, and pay tribute to everyone who has gathered at the Cairns Convention Centre to show your support for better health and wellbeing in regional and remote communities.

The Government shares your commitment to rural Australia. We want to strengthen the medical workforce and improve access to healthcare – to better meet the priorities, needs and challenges that come with life in the bush.

To help tackle one of our biggest priorities – locating more doctors, particularly GPs, in rural locations – we are investing \$93 million in a national Rural Workforce Agency Program to encourage graduating doctors to take up and retain postings in the areas they are most needed.

We've also created a National Rural Health Commissioner to act as an independent and high-profile advocate; we're reforming medical training and distribution; and we're developing the rural generalist pathway to upskill GPs in areas requiring a broader range of services.

Together with additional funding for the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and our ongoing commitment to working with communities to Close the Gap in Indigenous health, the Government is working hard to deliver better outcomes for people living in regional and remote areas.

In turn, I hope these measures give a sense of the value that my Government places on your professions, and how critical your knowledge, skills and efforts will be to the success of these reforms.

I thank all of you for your commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of our community, and trust you will have a productive conference.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Malcolm Turnbull'.

The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP
Prime Minister of Australia

21 March 2017