



**15TH NATIONAL
RURAL HEALTH
CONFERENCE**
Better together!

24-27 MARCH 2019
Hotel Grand Chancellor
Hobart, Tasmania



**NATIONAL RURAL
HEALTH
ALLIANCE LTD**

Embargo

6am Sunday 24 March 2019

Press Conference

11.15am, Sunday 24 March 2019

Lawns of Parliament House, Hobart.

Budget boost needed for rural health

Over one thousand health experts from around Australia will gather in Hobart to call on the major political parties to pledge a significant boost in rural health spending in the lead up to the federal election.

A gathering of rural, remote and regional health workers at the 15th National Rural Health Conference in Hobart from 24-27 March will outline the case to both Rural Health Minister Bridget McKenzie and Shadow Health Minister Catherine King for urgent new rural health spending.

National Rural Health Alliance Chair Tanya Lehmann said, "The last election promised a National Rural Health Commissioner. The appointment of Prof Paul Worley as Commissioner was welcome.

"We also welcome the Commissioners increased focus on the allied health professions – most of whom are fractionally represented in much of rural Australia.

"It is essential that the Commissioner has a focus on creating and sustaining a rural health workforce where it is clear that the solutions require the involvement of related service sectors – including aged care, mental health, disability and Indigenous healthcare, Ms Lehmann said.

National Rural Health Alliance Chief Executive Mark Diamond said "Commissioner Worley has made recommendations on training and work pathways for Rural Generalist Medical Practitioners. That work now needs to continue with the range of other health professions that are in even greater need of repair."

"The Federal Budget on 2 April must fully fund the training pathway for Rural Generalist Practitioners. It is vital that funding is urgently provided for additional allied health staff across country areas."

Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia Chief Executive, Dr Martin Laverty said chronic illness will balloon over the next decade, and the rural health system is not currently funded to cope.

"Cancer will jump 15%, mental illness 22%, and Alzheimer's and Dementia 47%. Country people have accepted less service access for too long. An election boost can deliver more care," Dr Laverty said.

The more than one thousand rural, remote and regional health workers are meeting from Sunday to Wednesday in Hobart.

Press Conference

National Rural Health Alliance Chair Tanya Lehmann, National Rural Health Alliance Chief Executive Mark Diamond, and Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia Chief Executive Dr Martin Laverty will



Royal Flying Doctor Service

ruralhealth.org.au/15nrhc



15TH NATIONAL
RURAL HEALTH
CONFERENCE
Better together!

24-27 MARCH 2019

Hotel Grand Chancellor
Hobart, Tasmania



NATIONAL RURAL
HEALTH
ALLIANCE LTD

conduct a Press Conference at 11.15am on Sunday 24 March 2019 on the *lawn of Parliament House* in Hobart. A RFDS flight simulator and road ambulance will be available for video and still images.

Media Inquiries: Cathy Beadnell, 0488 528 472

Principal Sponsor



Royal Flying Doctor Service

ruralhealth.org.au/15nrhc