Priority recommendations show the way forward for rural and remote health

Nearly 340 recommendations for improving rural and remote health care were made by delegates who attended the recent 13th National Rural Health Conference in Darwin. From these, ten were selected as stand-out proposals which, if implemented, would contribute to more accessible, affordable, safe and well-coordinated health care for people living in rural and remote Australia.

The ten priority recommendations include those with a focus on: a contribution to improved health and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; the need for fast, reliable and affordable digital connection for people, services and businesses in rural and remote areas; a proposal for a Senate Inquiry into food security in remote and rural areas; and working to ensure the successful implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in rural areas.

“One of the strengths of the biennial National Rural Health Conference is the generation of recommendations for action to improve policies and programs for rural and remote health," CEO of the National Rural Health Alliance, Gordon Gregory, said.

“The Conference recommendations play an important part in setting the rural and remote health sector's agenda for years to come. Our hope is that they lead to action and policy change through the continued advocacy of the individuals and organisations that support them.”

The priority recommendations highlight the desperate need for a health system that enables people in rural and remote areas to have the necessary lifestyle, access and supports for a healthy and productive life. Sufficient access to health services, nutritious and affordable food, the means for economic and social engagement, and the targeted distribution of health professionals that put the right clinicians in the right place, are foundations of a health care system often taken for granted in the capital cities, but sorely missed in the bush.

You can access the full list of recommendations, read the interim and priority recommendations, or have a look at the official Conference communiqué on the Conference website at www.ruralhealth.org.au/13nrhc/recommendations.

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For more information about the 13th National Rural Health Conference visit www.ruralhealth.org.au/13nrhc