



Deloraine & Westbury Medical Centre

29/09/2021

Parliamentary Business Committees Senate affairs re Primary Health Services

To Senate Committee

There are many and varied reason why it is difficult to recruit, attract and retain GPs in regional Australia and Tasmania in particular.

1. Social isolation
 - a. GPs families do not like coming to regional areas, they want easy access to towns for schooling, entertainment, and social groups. It usually only leaves IMG who must come to regional areas and have no intention of staying. They tend move to where family is, or other similar groups are.
2. AHPRA regulations and time to approve new applications
 - a. I understand the need for AHPRA to check and test new applicants but the length of time it takes to approve an IMG's application. They fist must undertake a PESCI exam which can take up to 6 months to do and then the paperwork goes into AHPRA and that process usually takes up to 12 months for approval. Total time waiting for a GP is approximately 15-18 months. This process needs to be shortened to help out a practice who has a GP leave and then you are waiting this length of time for a replacement.
3. Incentive to come and to stay in a rural and remote region
 - a. It would be helpful if there were more incentives to encourage GP's to come to rural and remote areas and stay for longer periods other than the time it takes to pass the FRACGP exams and then leave for bigger and brighter areas. Practices invest at lot of time and money into training and then the GP who has passed exams will not stay on.
4. After hours work
 - a. We find that with recruitment as soon as we state that the GP will need to do after hours and look after a local hospital and two nursing homes in a roster with the other GP's, it is like a shutter comes down. They are not interested at all. They only want to work 9-5 or part time and If a way could be found to encourage to incentivise them to do these unsociable hours would help enormously. We are in area MM5 and spend large amounts of time continuously recruiting due to the time it takes and to find someone willing to come and do the afterhours as well.

Thank you for the time taken to read our submission and I hope improvement can be found.

Yours sincerely

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I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and Elders past, present and emerging.