

YOUNG DISTRICT MEDICAL CENTRE
(ESTABLISHED 1875)

Dr D P Sevier
Dr S A Ross
Dr W Meagher
Dr D Larcombe
Dr F Gleeson
Dr Tom Douch

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The Senate Community Affairs Committees

Re: The factors affecting the supply of health services and medical professionals in rural areas

Thank you for the opportunity to express our view on the current Australian Standard Geographical Classification- Remoteness Areas Classifications (ASGC-RA)

Our general practice is situated in Young, New South Wales which is a mid-sized country town with a shire population of 12,500 people. It is in the south west slopes of New South Wales approximately 2 hours drive from Wagga Wagga, Bathurst and Orange. The afore mentioned are cities with populations ranging between 35,000 and 60,000 people, with all the attractions associated with major centers.

The ASGC-RA is a geographic classification system that was developed in 2001 by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), as a statistical geography structure which allows quantitative comparisons between 'city' and 'country' Australia. The purpose of the structure is to classify data from census Collection Districts (CDs) into broad geographical categories. The Remoteness Area categories are defined in terms of 'remoteness' - the physical distance of a location from the nearest Urban Centre (access to goods and services) based on population size.

Wagga Wagga, Bathurst and Orange are all classified under the new remoteness classification as RA 2. Young is also classified as Inner Regional- RA2. We find it difficult to accept, that Young can be banned together with the likes of these cities.

Young under the RA 2 classification now has to compete on the same playing field with Wagga Wagga, Bathurst and Orange for medical practitioners – clearly these centres have a distinct advantage over Young especially when it comes to Internationally Medical Graduates, the majority of who are city orientated.

We believe that the RA 2 classification has directly affected this practices ability to attract and retain medical practitioners, which in turn affects the sustainability of the practice.

Sincerely

David Kay
Practice Manager