

## RDASA Election Wish List 2026

Rural Doctors Association of South Australia (RDASA) is the peak representative body in SA that advocates for rural doctors and the communities in which they work.

After polling our members, there are a number of policies RDASA calls on each of SA's political parties and independent candidates to commit to:

### ACCESS TO CARE FOR RURAL PATIENTS

- Currently, there is nowhere on the Eyre Peninsula performing cardiac stress tests. This needs to be addressed urgently.
- Country patients who have been on a public waiting list for surgery but are then assessed as not suitable for their local hospital go back to the bottom of the waiting list to get their procedure done in the city. They should get recognition for 'time already served'.
- There is a promise to widen accessibility for the PATS scheme. For patients requiring radiotherapy at the Lyell McEwin, each trip might be below the threshold for a subsidy but they might need 40 daily trips for a month. Eligibility needs to take into account the total distances travelled
- Increased funding for public psychology services in rural areas.
- Secure long term funding for the Priority Care Centre in Mount Barker. This can serve as a model for similar centres elsewhere to work in cooperation with not in competition with Urgent Care Centres.
- Funding for a pilot project to provide psychosocial support to patients with long term, complex mental health problems.
- Is there scope for some clinics to be set up in rural SA, like the Hopper Ant Clinic in Mount Barker? The GP Alliance has suggested setting up a Centre of Excellence in Neurodiversity in the city. Will there be branch clinics in rural SA?
- Funding for rural women to access antenatal ultrasound scans.

## WORKFORCE

- Incentives for nurses and allied health professionals to train and work rurally.
- Support for appropriately trained nurse practitioners to work with rural GPs and hospitals.
- Accommodation support for registrars/nurses/allied health professionals to work in rural areas. Currently Port Augusta has the Range View project to build an accommodation facility for health professionals. What support is the State Government giving to this or other projects?
- RDASA has been pleased to be involved in the Under and Postgraduate Medical Training in Regional SA Working Group Chaired by Dr Michael Cusack. A priority which has already been identified is taking stock of how many trainees we have in rural SA and how many supervisors. We commend this initiative to the Government and seek a commitment that its recommendations will be pursued.
- On the subject of supervision, we would draw the State Government's attention to the Rural Doctors' Association of Australia (our parent body) and its pre-Budget priorities which include a request for increased remuneration for supervision of medical students, pre-vocational doctors and GP registrars. We realise that this is a Federal issue but seek a commitment that our State Government applies what pressure it can to have these recommendations adopted.

## REMUNERATION

- Locums come and go and get paid \$2,500+ per day to provide a service where there is no commitment to our rural communities and there is poor continuity of care, while doctors who commit to a town get paid a fraction of that amount. This inequity is leading to the death of small town general practice in South Australia. Capping locum fees is not legally possible, apparently. Why are the LHNs allowed to continue to draw these locum fees from alternative funding pools? Would putting a stop to this force the LHNs to look for long term solutions in these towns?

- We would like to point out that the current contracts with rural GPs expire in January of 2028. The RSS is already putting thought into a timeline for creation of new contracts. We seek a commitment from whoever wins office that they will facilitate this process.
- Likewise the new Enterprise Agreement with employed doctors mentions Rural Generalist but there is still inequity between, for example, ED services provided by RGs and those provided by Fellows of the College of Emergency Medicine. We would like to see those inequities addressed during the next round of negotiations.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

- Are there any plans for making the helipads at Mannum, Murray Bridge and Victor Harbour operational again?
- Has land for a new Barossa Hospital been purchased? Is it in the Barossa or Roseworthy?

The forthcoming South Australian Election provides an opportunity for the current SA Government, and the aspiring state government, to create a stable, positive, and sustainable future for rural healthcare in South Australia.

This requires investment in the rural medical workforce, the wider rural health workforce and rural health and hospital infrastructure - but it is an investment that would deliver a sustainable future for rural healthcare in this state, and better health outcomes for rural South Australians.

Dr Bill Geyer  
President  
0409 633 045  
[bgeyer@tanundadoctors.com.au](mailto:bgeyer@tanundadoctors.com.au)