

# 2022 RURAL HEALTH ISSUES SURVEY

## Introduction

The purpose of this survey is to identify the major areas of need that are central to the provision of quality health care in rural Australia. The results of this survey will help the AMA target its advocacy efforts to ensure the health needs of people living in rural and remote Australia are met.

Please only fill out the survey once. If more than one is completed, the results will not be used.

To thank you for your time, completing the survey will put you in the running to win a RM Williams gift card valued at \$500. If you would like to be in the draw to win the gift card, please provide your name, email address and a contact phone number. This information will only be used to notify the winner. The winner will be drawn randomly within one week of the completion of the survey.

## Q1 Contact information

**First Name:**

**Last Name:**

**Email address:**

**Phone number:**

*Please answer or tick the appropriate responses to the following two questions*

## **Demographics:**

### Q2 Please indicate your type of practice:

- General practitioner (GP)
- Non-GP specialist – private practice
- Salaried doctor
- Doctor in training
- Other, please specify:

.....  
.....

### Q3 Where is your practice?

- NSW
- VIC
- QLD
- SA
- WA
- TAS
- NT
- ACT

*Please rate how important you believe the following 31 proposals are to improving rural health care, using the categories – Critical, Large, Moderate, Small, None.*

**Rural Hospitals:**

**Q4 Establish tied funding for rural hospitals, including requirements for state/territories to meet agreed performance benchmarks.**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q5 Improved funding for rural maternity services.**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q6 Ensure that rural hospitals have modern facilities and equipment.**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q7 Provide extra funding and resources to support improved staffing levels, including core visiting medical officers, to allow workable rosters.**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q8 Increase funding for appropriately trained ancillary staff at rural hospitals.**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large

- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Maintaining procedural skills:**

**Q9** Establish more integrated programs to allow rural doctors to maintain and upgrade their procedural skills in public hospitals.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q10** Ensure general practitioners with recognised procedural skills can access appropriate hospital credentialing and facilities.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q11** The introduction of a public interest test to apply before a rural hospital can be closed or downgraded.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Specialist services:**

**Q12** Additional funding for specialist outreach services, appropriately integrated with local services.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q13** Increase funding for patient assisted travel schemes for patients (including their carers) who must travel long distances for hospital treatment.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q14** Develop specific initiatives to improve access to specialist services.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Targeted financial incentives:**

**Q15** Increase incentives, such as rural incentive payments, to recruit/retain doctors to work in rural areas.

a. More Doctors for Rural Australia Program (MDRAP)

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

b. National Rural Generalist Pathway (NRGP)

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

c. Workforce Incentive Program (WIP)

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate

- Small
- None

**Practice support:**

**Q16** Provide funding to small rural general practices to assist with the costs of undertaking and maintaining practice accreditation.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q17** Provision of general practice infrastructure grants to support enhanced medical and/or allied health services or improved training facilities.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Prevocational & specialist education:**

**Q18** Increase the available infrastructure, resources and supervision to support prevocational and specialist training in rural areas.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q19** Encourage medical colleges to include rotations for trainees to rural areas - subject to appropriate experience and supervision.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q20** Encourage medical colleges to offer more generalist training places for trainees.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q21** Implement a funding program to support prevocational doctors to undertake rotations in rural general practice settings.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q22** Establish regional service and training networks to enhance opportunities for specialist training in rural areas and support rurally based career paths.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Undergraduate medical education:**

**Q23** Provide scholarship-based programs to support medical students' exposure to rural clinical practice

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q24** Increase the intake to medical schools of students with a rural background.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small

- None

**Q25 Increase the number of medical students who undertake at least a one year rural clinical placement(s).**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Time off for leave & personal development:**

**Q26 Further expand funding to ensure locum relief for rural general practitioners and specialists.**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Family support:**

**Q27 Improve access to employment opportunities for rural doctors' partners and/or family members.**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q28 Improve access to education for rural doctors' family members through better infrastructure or financial support.**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Continuous Professional Development:**

**Q29 Improve access to educational support for rural doctors including CPD and mentoring.**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Technology:**

**Q30 Improve connectivity including rollout of the National Broadband Network, the Mobile Black Spot Program, the Regional Connectivity Program and the Regional Tech Hub.**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q31 Provide telehealth Medicare items that fairly compensate doctors for patient and non-patient contact time.**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q32 Provide appropriate tools and workforce training initiatives to assist practitioners in adoption of telehealth and e-prescribing to improves workflow.**

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**COVID-19 context:**

**Q33 Access to the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE), training programs and guidelines in response to COVID-19 pandemic for medical practitioners in rural hospitals and clinics.**

Importance:

- Critical



- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q34** Access to vaccine roll out among rural communities.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Q35** Support patients with education for, and access to, digital health and assistive technologies to receive high-quality care at home and maintain independence while reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

**Oral health:**

**Q36** Access to fluoridated drinking water and oral health services.

Importance:

- Critical
- Large
- Moderate
- Small
- None

*Please answer the following two questions using the space provided*

**The reward of rural practice:**

**Q37** What do you find most rewarding about rural medical practice - either professionally or personally?

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**Q38** Additional Comments or suggestions

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