



## Media release

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# Doctors groups strive to get critically needed medical services back into flood-affected towns

**Key Rural Health Organisations are banding together to help their flood affected colleagues get back up and running after many lost their entire surgeries to the floods.**

Dr Paul Mara, president of the Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) said that getting medical services running as quickly as possible should be a key priority for these communities.

"Rural towns often struggle to get doctors, even when they haven't been washed away by a flood," Dr Mara said.

"The medical practices in these towns were already busy, even before they had to deal with the increased health risks from contaminated flood water and drinking water, as well as the accidents that occur during the clean-up.

"It is essential that we get doctors back as quickly as possible, not only for the communities' health needs during this period, but also for the morale of recovering communities to know their medical service is re-established."

The RDAA has met with the key rural health organisations, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, Health Workforce Queensland and the Rural Doctors Association of Queensland, to discuss the coordination of these efforts.

"We have resolved to form a 'working group' to help coordinate efforts to get medical practices back to these communities, and to provide support to keep them running over the next critical period of re-establishment," Dr Mara said.

"By working with Queensland Health; other Government agencies and key stakeholders and the many doctors who have already volunteered their assistance, we will develop and promote strategies for the recovery and rebuilding of sustainable rural medical practices".

"As a group we will gather, collate and disseminate information such as affected areas, affected doctors and offers of assistance, to pass on to relevant authorities".

"We will also represent a united voice to communicate with both State and Federal government and to advocate for rural doctors and rural communities," Dr Mara said.

"We are urgently gathering information on just how many rural doctors and surgeries have been impacted by the flood disaster across Queensland and other states, in order to seek special assistance from the Federal Government and relevant State governments".

"We ask all affected doctors to contact us so we can make a register of what is needed and help arrange for relief. We have had a great response from other doctors across Australia offering what support they can, so it is imperative we know how best to distribute and coordinate this aid."

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