



Rural Doctors Association
of Queensland
"Caring for the Country"

Media Release

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Travel subsidy increase a healthy start

THE Rural Doctors Association of Queensland has welcomed yesterday's announcement by the LNP to double travel and accommodation subsidies for rural and regional Queenslanders.

RDAQ president Dr Ewen McPhee has responded to the LNP's commitment to double the travel subsidy from 15 cents per km to 30 cents per km, and double the accommodation subsidy from \$30 to \$60 per person for patients forced to travel for treatment and medical care.

Dr McPhee, who is based in Emerald, said the increase was warranted given that rural patients have poorer access to specialist care frequently leading to poorer health outcomes.

"Recent studies reveal that rural people are more likely to die of cancer than their city cousins due to the issues of access," he said.

"The tyranny of distance places significant financial barriers to accessing specialist care in the cities. This is recognition of the burden faced by rural and regional Queenslanders.

"As more services become difficult to access, such as birthing services, people are finding that they have to travel further to get the care that city folk take for granted."

While Dr McPhee welcomed the LNP pledge, he also urged for increased government spending on medical infrastructure in rural and regional Queensland in a bid to reduce unnecessary travel to access health services.

"While we support increases to the travel subsidy for people who really need to travel to larger centres, we would rather see the money for unnecessary travel spent on maintaining rural health services particularly maternity so that rural mums do not need to travel," he said.

"The money saved on keeping maternity services and other minor surgeries close to rural areas could then be spent on increasing the subsidy for those who have no choice but to go to a larger facility for specialist, higher-level treatment."

For comment or further information contact:

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