

Media Release

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Latest rural health data's shocking statistics is a wakeup call for candidates

If you are one of the 7.3 million Australians living in rural, regional or remote areas you are four times more likely to die an unavoidable death than Australians living in metropolitan areas.

Dr Arn Sprogis, Chair of the Tuross Head Progress Association's (THPAs) Health Subcommittee said the [Rural Health in Australia Snapshot 2025](#)¹ released by the National Rural Health Alliance shines a light on the stark impact that unfair and inequitable access to and funding for healthcare has on regional, rural and remote communities.

"This situation hasn't occurred overnight. It's a result of decades of shameful indifference and neglect by both political parties leading to a \$850 per person per year deficit for health funding in rural communities," Dr Sprogis said.

"The gap in life expectancy between Australians living in rural areas and our cities is shocking. People die from potentially avoidable causes at higher rates the further away they reside from Major Cities. Men in Very Remote areas are dying up to 13.6 years earlier and women 12.7 years earlier than those in Metropolitan areas."

Poorer access to primary health care in rural Australia is a major concern, with the snapshot highlighting higher rates of potentially preventable hospitalisations in all areas outside of Major Cities, with the rate 2-3 times as high in Remote and Very Remote areas.

"We know that prolonged delays in accessing GPs and primary care services forces many people in towns and villages across the Far South Coast (FSC) to travel long distances for essential care. It also flows on to delayed access to vital specialist services," Dr Sprogis said.

The snapshot highlights the inadequate supply of most health professionals in rural areas to meet health needs. Metropolitan areas have more GPs providing primary care (115.2 FTE per 100,000 population) compared to Regional Centres (109.9), Small Rural Towns (78.2), Remote Communities (68.1) and Very Remote Communities (70.7).

"The data and statistics are irrefutable but they don't tell the human story. We are calling on individuals in communities from Kiama to Eden to share their stories of the impact that poor access to GPs, nurse practitioners and primary care services has had on them or someone they know," Dr Sprogis said.

The THPA is building an alliance of communities across the FSC calling on immediate action to provide fair and equitable access and funding for healthcare.

"This is a wakeup call for Gilmore and Eden Monaro candidates in the lead up to the federal election to commit to action now to address this stark imbalance. Our communities demand action. They deserve action," Dr Sprogis said.

Join the THPA's healthcare campaign at www.thpa.com.au/health-2025 and send your stories to the THPA at mediathpa@gmail.com

¹ [NRHA-Rural-Health-in-Australia-Snapshot-2025.pdf](#)