



**Allied Health
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The Hon Dr David Gillespie MP
Minister for Regional Health
By email Minister.Gillespie@health.gov.au

cc
The Hon Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health & Aged Care
By email Minister.Hunt@health.gov.au

10 December 2021

Incentives for health professionals in rural and remote areas

Dear Minister,

We write concerning your announcement that the federal Government will provide an incentive for eligible doctors and nurse practitioners to practice in rural, remote or very remote areas of Australia, by eliminating all or part of their Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) debt.

While we welcome this development, we are dismayed that allied health practitioners are not also included in this incentive to boost the health workforce and thereby provide more equitable access to health services.

Allied health services are key to early intervention in and prevention of health conditions that if left untreated result in costly hospitalisations and increased burden of disease. As acknowledged in your Media Release, there are profound shortages of allied health practitioners in rural and remote communities that significantly contribute to poorer health.

It therefore makes no sense not to similarly incentivise allied health. Not doing so sends a message that our services are not equally vital to health equity, contradicting evidence consistently provided to Government by AHPA, the National Rural Health Commissioner and many others.

We request an urgent meeting with you to discuss this issue.

Kind regards

Claire Hewat
Chief Executive Officer

Advocating on behalf of Australia's allied health professions to create fairer and more equitable health, aged care and disability systems.