

The Health of regional Queenslanders is being put at real risk

The QPSU is calling for urgent changes to the integrity reforms currently before Parliament to include a code of ministerial accountability.

**JOINT MEDIA RELEASE
LHMU and QPSU**

The Queensland Government is attempting to remove important attraction and retention payments for health professionals in some rural areas which could lead to serious public health care consequences for Queenslanders living in regional communities, unions representing public sector workers said today.

"This will be a big blow to regional public health care services which must attract and retain staff in order to deliver the services that Queenslanders rely on every day," said QPSU acting General Secretary Kate Flanders.

"Cuts to attraction and retention payments can potentially result in reduced public health care services and longer waiting times.

"The truth is that you cannot slash payments for public health practitioners who are working as scientists, radiographers, pathologists, physiotherapists, pharmacists, psychologists and social workers, and expect them to keep working and raising their families in regional Queensland," Ms Flanders said.

"This will simply result in health practitioners snapping up jobs in other states or overseas as a result of a national and global shortage of health care workers. "This is salt in the already inflicted wound from a below inflation pay offer of 2.5 per cent," Ms Flanders said.

The QPSU has partnered with the LHMU for the HP Stronger Together campaign, designed to raise awareness of Government cost-cutting and its effect on healthcare in Queensland.

LHMU Secretary Gary Bullock said that it was important all Queenslanders understood the implications of slashing funding in regional and remote areas, something the campaign would be highlighting.

"Make no mistake, this will make it harder to attract and retain professionals to these areas," he said.

"It's already hard enough to get health professionals to service communities outside the major centres.

"Queenslanders in those communities pay their taxes too. They are entitled to receive the best care possible."

Potentially impacted Queensland communities

Atherton, Babinda, Herberton, Innisfail, Malanda, Mareeba, Millaa Millaa, Douglas Shire (Mossman), Tully, Baralaba, Biloela, Blackwater, Capella, Cracow, Dingo, Emerald, Gemfields, Moura, Springsure, Theodore, Woorabinda, Cooktown, Cherbourg, Chinchilla, Dalby, Glenmorgan, Goondiwindi, Inglewood, Jandowae, Kingaroy, Meandara, Miles, Millmerran, Moonie, Murgon, Nanango, Stanthorpe, Tara, Taroom, Texas, Wandoan, Warwick, Wondai, Clermont, Dysart, Moranbah, Proserpine, Bollon, Dirranbandi, Injune, Mitchell, Mungundi, Roma, St George, Surat, Wallumbilla, Biggenden, Eidsvold, Gayndah, Monto, Mundubbera, Ayr, Bowen, Charters Towers, Collinsville, Home Hill, Ingham.

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