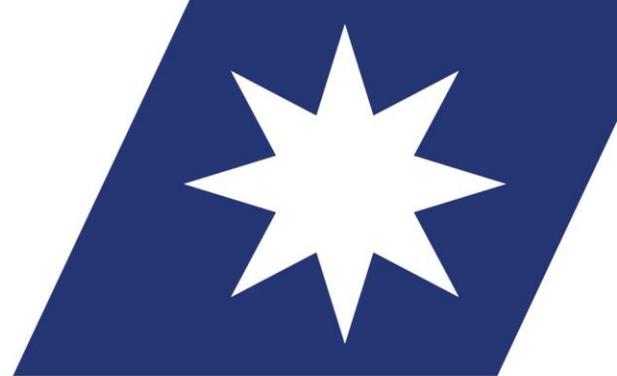


**SHANE KNUTH**

Katter's Australian Party

**Member for Hill**



## MEDIA RELEASE

August 19, 2022

### **Knuth stands up in Parliament and calls for more GPs**

Member for Hill Shane Knuth used State Parliament this week to call for immediate action on attracting more GP's to rural and remote areas.

"I have been warning the State Government for a long time that we were heading for a Health crisis in regional and remote areas of Queensland. There is no doubt access to GP's is rapidly declining and we need immediate action," Mr Knuth said.

"GP practices are closing at an alarming rate; people are being turned away from hospital emergency departments, there is a lack of nurses, extended waitlists for vital surgery and a lack of life-saving medical equipment such as dialysis chairs.

Mr Knuth said to make matters worse the Rural Doctors Association has expressed deep concern about the federal government's proposed changes to the distribution priority area (DPA).

Currently, overseas GPs are required to work up to 10 years in regional centres before they can work in a larger regional city, but this change means that GPs can instead go straight to outer metro or larger regional cities.

"The DPA wasn't perfect to begin with, but this change makes it even worse for smaller regional centres. Our State Government should be kicking down doors to fight this change, but are mute on this issue" Mr Knuth said.

Mr Knuth also called for additional investment from the state Government to smaller regional hospitals to ensure they are fully equipped and staffed to meet increased demands.

"Investment on targeted packages and programs to provide greater incentives to GPs to relocate to smaller regional centres and for school leavers to study medicine and return to their region of origin should be a priority.

The state must also work with their federal buddies to increase Medicare bulk-billing rebates, with the increase only available for GPs who work in rural and regional centres.

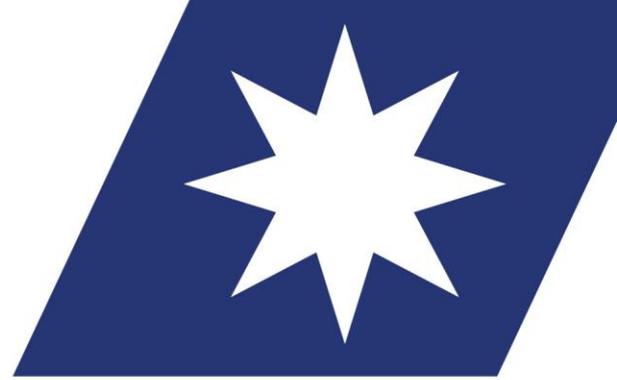
"It angers me that we will spend billions on the Olympics, which will only benefit the south-east, while basic health services in smaller regional centres are heading for disaster.

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## MEDIA RELEASE

The government must get its priorities right and fix the health crisis in rural and regional Queensland.”

**-ENDS-**

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