



# STUART GRIMLEY MP

Member for Western Victoria  
State Leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party



## MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 16 October, 2019

### Western Victoria Doctor & Medical Staff Shortage

Today in Parliament, Stuart Grimley MP sought answers from the Andrews Government about the steps they're taking to ensure that all Western Victorians have access to timely health services.

During Question Time, Mr Grimley asked the Government what they were doing "to ensure that all Victorians have access to reliable and expert health services" especially general practitioners in rural and regional Western Victoria.

Earlier this year, it was reported that rural patients were waiting up to three weeks to secure an appointment to see a doctor, which corresponded with a spike in presentations to the local emergency departments.

A Government funded website [Rural Workforce Agency Victoria](#), lists vacancies for regional health jobs 42 general practitioner positions are currently vacant, with an additional nine locum positions still requiring urgent fulfilment within the Western Victoria district alone.

Having visited the vast majority of the 24 Councils within his electorate, Mr Grimley can attest to the grave concern held by local Government representatives in retaining general practitioners, qualified medical staff and mental health professionals to keep their constituents healthy and able to access essential services.

Earlier this year, Mr Grimley asked the Government to commit to reducing mental health wait times – sometimes of up to six weeks - in rural Victoria. The Government subsequently responded that "The truth is, we don't have the best mental health system we could – or should – have. It is clear that our mental health system needs systemic reform."

The Government outlined some of their financial commitments, as well as the Royal Commission into the Mental Health System currently underway, of which the Government has committed to implementing all its recommendations.

### Quotes Attributable to Stuart Grimley MP:

"The Government recently addressed similar concerns regarding teaching staff in rural and regional Victoria by offering financial incentives to prospective educators. If the Government is serious about access to health services for regional and rural Victorians, they should look into a similar concept for incentivising GPs.

Change needs to happen, whether it is financial bonuses or even tax concessions for doctors who choose to live and work in regional areas.

Everyone has a right to timely and efficient health care, regardless of where they live; metro or rural.

Waiting up to three weeks to see a GP is simply not good enough for Victorians."

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