



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### TONIC FOR RURAL DOCTOR SHORTAGE

In a major positive step for local rural health, the Federal Government has announced a total of 80 medical places at the University of New England (UNE) and the University of Newcastle to establish a Rural Medical School at UNE.

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has, over many years been a diligent advocate for the establishment of a Medical School in the region and is delighted by the announcement.

“I congratulate and thank all who have been involved in this venture, particularly the Health and Ageing Minister, Tony Abbott, the Education, Science and Training Minister, the Hon Julie Bishop and the former Minister, Hon Brendan Nelson for their interest in this concept. Training medical students in our area will develop a love of the country, encouraging them to practice in the country after graduation.

I also commend the NSW premier, Morris Iemma for his commitment to providing the necessary medical teaching infrastructure for these Commonwealth funded university places.

The success of the University Department of Rural Health arrangement at the Tamworth Base Hospital and the development of a relationship between the University of New England, University of Newcastle and Hunter New England Health has, no doubt underpinned the confidence of the government to make this commitment.

This announcement is a testament to the power of community support, with the 2005 “Vision New England Summit” targeting the proposed Medical School as a method to ease the our regions chronic health-worker shortage. It is also an excellent example of Commonwealth and State working together to achieve real health outcomes,” Mr Windsor said.

The Medical School will be a joint venture between the University of New England and the University of Newcastle.

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