



MEDIA RELEASE

Good health and wellbeing in rural and remote Australia.

20 September 2015

BOOSTING RURAL AND ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HEALTH

Today's announcement by Prime Minister Turnbull promises an important and very welcome boost to the Australian Government's work to improve the health of both rural/remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Fiona Nash's appointment as Minister for Rural Health is to be applauded. Minister Nash has proved her commitment to better health for people in rural and remote areas and will now be able to focus more strongly on this.

It is made possible by the appointment of Ken Wyatt as Assistant Minister for Health. Ken Wyatt will presumably have responsibility, under Minister Sussan Ley, for the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

There will not be a person in the land who does not welcome the appointment of an Indigenous man with high level and direct experience of the health sector in two States as the responsible Minister for the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. He will have the support and good will of everyone in his endeavours to meet Australia's greatest unmet social challenge.

The Alliance notes the comments by Prime Minister Turnbull about the infrastructure and human capital of Australia's cities having been, in some respects, ignored.

"That is of course what rural people feel much of the time about their national Government," said Gordon Gregory, NRHA Chief Executive Officer.

"I am sure that the Prime Minister's references today apply, in his mind, just as much to rural and remote people and industries as to the cities," he said.

"Working with Minister Ley, Fiona Nash and Ken Wyatt will be able to build on the Prime Minister's views about the value of human capital and the need to integrate policies across the board for productivity and wellbeing in rural and remote areas."

The Alliance looks forward to continuing its work with Ministers Ley and Nash and to developing a close working relationship with Assistant Minister Wyatt.

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