



## Media Release



Joint media release  
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# Better together! New single-site hospital the only solution for Albury-Wodonga

Rural doctors are urging the Federal, NSW and Victorian governments to 'bite the bullet' and build a new greenfields single-site hospital for the Albury-Wodonga region within five years, warning it is the only viable long-term solution in meeting the region's tertiary care needs.

The Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA), together with the state Rural Doctors Associations of Victoria (RDav) and New South Wales (RDANSW), say current work to expand the existing Albury Base Hospital – with a view to making it the region's single-site hospital – is wasting taxpayer money, wreaking havoc for patients, and will not result in the hospital meeting the region's current needs... let alone its future needs.

Their warning comes with a by-election for the federal seat of Farrer to be held in May, and state elections to be held in Victoria this year and NSW next year.

During recent meetings at Parliament House in Canberra, RDAA raised the urgent need for a new single-site hospital with senior federal politicians, including Ministers and Shadow Ministers, and their advisors.

**Currently, hospital services for the region are split across two campuses – one in Wodonga (on the Victorian side of the border) and the other in Albury (NSW) – with patients and health staff having to travel between both to access different services.**

Risks to patient safety in having the health service split across two campuses were raised by Albury Wodonga Health's own Clinical Services Plan in 2021\*, with the health service also confirming in correspondence to the state health ministers that funding allocated in 2022 for the expansion of Albury Base Hospital would not be enough to make it a single-site hospital for the region.

"It wasn't going to work then, and it isn't going to work now" **RDAA President, Dr Sarah Chalmers, said.**

"It really is a no-brainer that hospital care in Albury-Wodonga should be combined in a new single-site facility that brings all the health services together under one roof – it will better support patient safety, be more time-efficient for staff and patients, and also more cost-efficient.

“At the moment, there’s a whole heap of time chewed up for patients and health staff in driving to and from each site, often multiple times a day – and if you are a non-urgent patient who can’t afford a car, taxi or rideshare, the only other option is a public bus ride that takes over an hour... not ideal if you are aged or unwell!

“Then there are the cost inefficiencies of maintaining both sites – and of course, despite best efforts, duplication of some services across both sites cannot be avoided, adding to the inefficiency.

“The current situation also increases the chance of some patient management and medication protocols being different at both sites, given one service operates under NSW policies and the other under Victoria’s.

“To everyone except the Federal, Victorian and NSW governments, bringing the region’s main tertiary hospital under one roof on a greenfields site makes complete sense. We are hopeful the looming by-election may help them see the light!”

**RDAV President, Dr Louise Manning, added:** “It is abundantly clear that the \$560 million in funding allocated by the Federal, NSW and Victorian governments to try to turn Albury Base Hospital into the region’s future single-site hospital is not enough... and even if it was, trying to transform the current hospital into a new regional hospital for the future is a recipe for years of chaos.

“The funding commitment falls way short of the estimated \$1.2 billion needed, all while existing patient care is having to be delivered alongside the current construction work – with some areas of the hospital being completely closed while this is happening.

“This is badly impacting the provision of care, creating significant bottlenecks at the hospital, and has been a major factor in the Albury Wodonga Health service having the longest elective waiting list in regional Victoria.

“The current plan risks Albury Base Hospital being a building site for the next 20 years, and even then it will not deliver a hospital that the region desperately needs to meet future capacity. A new, single-site greenfields hospital development is the only viable solution.”

**RDANSW President, Dr Rachel Christmas, said:** “The Albury and Wodonga hospitals combined make the largest hospital service between Melbourne and Sydney, yet we are stuck with an antiquated and inefficient two-hospital system that continues to impact badly on health service delivery.

“Just like a leaking roof, the longer you leave it, the more expensive it becomes to fix.

“A single-site greenfields hospital for the Albury-Wodonga region would be so much better for patients and staff, ultimately save a heap of taxpayer money, and avoid a lot of unnecessary ‘renovation pain’.

“With the federal by-election for Farrer just around the corner – and state elections being held in Victoria this year and NSW next year – this is a great opportunity for our federal and state governments to make a much-needed commitment to one of Australia’s largest regional centres... and the many people who live in it.”

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*\* From the website of Helen Haines MP (Independent Federal Member for Indi) - 12 February 2025:*  
[www.helenhaines.org/media/we-need-a-greenfield-single-site-hospital-on-the-border](http://www.helenhaines.org/media/we-need-a-greenfield-single-site-hospital-on-the-border)

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**Photos:**

- [Dr Sarah Chalmers](#)
- [Dr Louise Manning](#)
- [Dr Rachel Christmas](#)