

MEDIA RELEASE 15/06/21

WESTERN QUEENSLANDERS URGED TO HAVE THEIR SAY ABOUT CARING FOR OUR MOST VULNERABLE RESIDENTS

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY: Community forums held across the West to address health support for people with disabilities and elderly residents.

CLICK HERE: [Dropbox link to still images and audio grabs for media use.](#)

Western Queenslanders are being urged to take up a unique chance to have their say to a group of key decision-makers about disability and aged care services in their region.

The Western Queensland Primary Health Network (WQPHN) is staging a series of Community Consultation Forums where community members, local health practitioners and patients can express their views about health support for residents with high-care needs.

“It’s very important to hear the views of communities on the ground and this is a great opportunity for Western Queenslanders in our patch to engage with a group of high-level decision-makers in the disability and aged care space,” WQPHN CEO Sandy Gillies said.

“Having these key delegates from the leading health service providers in these sectors, all in the one room, is an opportunity that I urge all practitioners and residents who use these services or know someone who does, to have a say.”

In a recent WQPHN survey, just over 20% of health providers said they had a good experience with supporting patients with a mental health or psycho-social disability, while almost a third of those surveyed said they had an unsatisfactory experience.

The survey results relating to physical disabilities showed that only 16% of health providers had a good experience, while 37% said they had an unsatisfactory experience, with just 5% saying it was excellent.

“Honest feedback is what we’re seeking in regard to these services and our survey data clearly shows there are challenges that need to be addressed,” WQPHN Executive Manager Leisa Fraser said.

“Importantly, the issues that have been identified through the survey aren’t insurmountable, and with the additional feedback we will get from the Forums, we’ll have a detailed, evidence-based response to address these concerns.”

The Forums will be held in Roma, Longreach and Mount Isa, with speakers including representatives from the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN), Council on the Ageing (COTA) and the National Disability Services (NDS).

“One of topics we’ll be covering at the Forums will be addressing some myths that surround disability services,” QDN Project Manager Shelley Birrell said.

“A common myth we encounter is that you aren’t eligible to access NDIS support unless you have left school or have turned 18, where in truth you’re eligible for the NDIS from the moment you’re born.”

“This is a good example of why these Forums are an important way to unravel some of the confusion that’s out there and provide a trusted source of information for community members and service providers who attend.”

QDN will also discuss how local residents with disability can receive extra support to access the NDIS, through the Targeted Outreach Project which they are delivering in conjunction with the State Government’s Assessment and Referral Team.

Community Consultation Forums

Location	Date/Time	Venue
Roma	Tuesday 22 June 8:30am-12:00pm for Service Providers 1:00pm – 5:00pm for Community Members	Roma Explorers Inn, 44778 Warrego Hwy REGISTER HERE
Longreach	Thursday 24 June 8:30am-12:00pm for Service Providers 1:00pm–5:00pm for Community Members	Birdcage Hotel, 33 Duck St REGISTER HERE
Mount Isa	Tuesday 29 June 8:30am-12:00pm for Service Providers 1:00pm – 5:00pm for Community Members	Ibis Styles, Cnr Rodeo Dr & Camooweal St REGISTER HERE

Western Qld Primary Health Network (WQPHN) quick facts:

- commissions (or funds) health services in Western Queensland
- covers almost one million square kilometres of Queensland, 55% of the state’s total land area
- aligns health investment with demonstrated population health needs
- uses health intelligence data to orientate health services efficiently and effectively
- ensures the right primary health care is delivered, at the right time by the right provider
- advised by GPs and other health professionals and consumers
- one of 31 PHNs across Australia established and funded by the Commonwealth Government

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