

3 October 2024

Media Release

New leadership to enhance healthcare in rural Australia

The National Rural Health Alliance (the Alliance) is excited to announce the appointment of a new [Chairperson and Board Members](#) who will guide the organisation towards improved healthcare outcomes for rural communities across Australia.

Heather Keighley, a Lecturer at Flinders University College of Medicine and Public Health in Darwin and a Board member of the Australian College of Nursing (Rural Nursing and Midwifery Faculty) steps into the role of Chairperson. Ms Keighley has been a dedicated member of the Alliance Board since June 2020. Associate Professor Geoff Argus, the inaugural Director of Southern Queensland Rural Health, takes on the position of Deputy Chair. He has also been a long-standing ally of the Alliance and has served the Council and Board for many years.

Continuing on the Board are Jacqueline Emery, Nicole Liesis and Penny Stewart, alongside newly appointed members Anthony Paulson and Susan Trevillian. Anthony Paulson's people are from the Worimi and Mununjali nations and he is the acting General Manager of Joint Colleges Training Services. Susan Trevillian is Chair of the Rural and Remote Specialty Practice, Advanced Pharmacy Australia.

"Congratulations to our new Chair, Deputy Chair and new Directors on their appointments. We are thrilled to have such a diverse and experienced group overseeing the governance and strategic priorities of the Alliance. Their leadership will be invaluable to our rural communities," said Susi Tegen, Chief Executive of the Alliance.

"We are confident that the collective expertise of the new Board will enhance our mission of improving access to quality health care for those living in rural, regional and remote areas," she added.

"We bid farewell to Frank Quinlan, Executive Director of the Royal Flying Doctor Service. We thank him for his unwavering support and diligence to the Alliance Board over the years."

A special acknowledgment is extended to the past Chair, Associate Professor Nicole O'Reilly, Head of School Allied Health Sciences at Charles Darwin University, whose guidance has been instrumental in our work. Ms O'Reilly served as Chair since 2020 and has been with the Alliance on the Board and Council, on and off, since 2008.

"It has truly been a pleasure working with Nicole O'Reilly, and we wish her all the best in her future endeavours," added Ms. Tegen.

Media enquires: Kathya de Silva, Media and Communications Officer, National Rural Health Alliance, 0470 487 608