



Andrew Gee MP
Member for Orange

Professor David Perkins
Director CRRMH

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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GEE CONFIRMS FUNDING FOR RAMHP PROGRAM TO CONTINUE

Member for Orange Andrew Gee today visited the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health (CRRMH) in Orange following the announcement last Friday that he had reached an agreement with Minister for Mental Health Pru Goward for continued funding for the Centre to provide the state-wide management of the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program.

Mr Gee said he raised concerns about the government's ongoing funding for the Centre with Minister Goward, earlier this year. The Minister subsequently visited the Centre in June to discuss the important role the Centre plays as an academic leader in rural and remote mental health issues.

"Things were looking a bit grim there for a while with about 25 jobs on the line in Orange, however I think the turning point came when Minister Goward visited the Centre in June and was able to see first-hand the important work that it does," Mr Gee said.

"We were firstly able to re-secure funding for the Centre itself and then we also managed to claw back funding for the RAHMP.

"As close shaves go, you wouldn't want to get too much closer, but Minister Goward really saved the day.

"This ongoing funding commitment will ensure the continuity of established networks and activities and the continued development of initiatives and resources to keep this program relevant," Mr Gee said.

Mr Gee added that it was too early to call it a "done deal" just yet as final contract negotiations and signing would not occur until the end of the year. He also said he had invited Minister Goward back to Orange for signing and an official announcement.

"It's a great result for Orange and the whole region," Mr Gee concluded.

According to Director of the CRRMH Professor David Perkins there are 3 priorities in rural mental health:

- Keeping people mentally healthy
- Caring for people who are mentally ill
- Preventing suicide in rural communities

"Our key priority is to use the latest research to develop programs for mental health promotion, care and suicide prevention," Professor Perkins said.

“The Director and Staff are grateful to Andrew Gee, our Community Advisory Committee and the leaders of Community and Government organisations throughout Rural NSW who have supported us in the last 15 years.

“Together we will work for improved rural health in rural and remote communities,” Professor Perkins said.

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