

6 February 2025

New CEO announced for Rural Health West

Rural Health West is pleased to announce the appointment of Professor Catherine Elliott as its new Chief Executive Officer, effective 24 February 2025.

Professor Elliott brings a wealth of experience in executive leadership, clinical practice, research, and health service delivery, with a strong commitment to improving healthcare access and outcomes for rural and regional communities.

Professor Elliott joins Rural Health West following her tenure as Deputy Executive Director and Director of Research at The Kids Research Institute Australia, where she led efforts to enhance research excellence to improve the health and development of children.

Prior to this, she held roles as Professorial Chair of Allied Health and Kids Rehab at Curtin University and with the Child and Adolescent Health Service.

Her extensive experience includes consumer involvement, commercialisation and innovation, as well as health and disability service delivery.

Rural Health West Board Chair, Hon. Terry 'Tuck' Waldron, welcomed Professor Elliott to the organisation, highlighting her dedication to improving healthcare outcomes for rural communities.

"Professor Elliott's background as a clinician working in rural communities, combined with her recent efforts to improve healthcare access for families and children, makes her an ideal leader for Rural Health West.

"Her experience with research and evidence-based healthcare will ensure we continue to do our very best to support and strengthen the rural health workforce," Mr Waldron said.

Professor Elliott's research has focused on improving outcomes for children with neurological impairments, ensuring that clinical services are based on the best available evidence.

She has led multiple National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) clinical trials and cohort studies and remains a passionate advocate for integrating lived experience into healthcare research and service delivery.

Mr Waldron also acknowledged outgoing CEO Tim Shackleton for his nine years of dedicated leadership.

Under his guidance, the organisation has played a critical role in supporting the rural health workforce and advocating for sustainable healthcare solutions in regional Western Australia, through initiatives such as the Regional Health Professionals Network, the

multidisciplinary expansion of the Rural Health West conference, and strengthened cross-sector partnerships and collaborations.

“Tim has been a true champion for rural health over many years.

“His contribution has ensured Rural Health West in an integral part of the sector, and we wish him well in his future endeavours,” Mr Waldron said.

Professor Elliott said she was excited to take on the role and looked forward to working with the team at Rural Health West to support rural health professionals and communities.

“I am honoured to step into this role and to continue the vital work of ensuring rural communities have access to high-quality healthcare.

“I look forward to collaborating with our partners, stakeholders, and the dedicated team at Rural Health West to address the challenges and opportunities in rural health,” Professor Elliott said.

Career history

2020-2025	Telethon Kids Institute	Deputy Executive Director Director of Research
2017- present	Curtin University	Professor
2000-2020	Child and Adolescent Health Service	Professorial Chair Director of Research, Kids Rehab Senior Occupational Therapist
1998-2000	Ability WA	Senior Occupational Therapist

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Media enquiries:

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Rural Health West aims to improve access to quality healthcare for rural communities through the provision of a highly skilled, motivated and sustainable medical and allied health workforce. We are a not-for-profit organisation primarily funded through the WA Country Health Service and the Australian Government Department of Health.