

MEDIA RELEASE

23 June 2026

Goldfields GP turnover falls to decade low

The Goldfields has recorded its lowest GP workforce turnover in a decade, with new data also showing growth in GP numbers.

Rural Health West's latest *Rural General Practice in Western Australia: Annual Workforce Update* shows workforce turnover in the Goldfields fell to 9.8 per cent between November 2024 and November 2025 - the first time turnover has fallen below 10 per cent since 2014–15.

The result represents a significant improvement from recent years, when annual turnover rates were in the high teens and reached 27.4 per cent in 2021–22.

Rural Health West Chief Executive Officer Professor Catherine Elliott said the figures indicated the Goldfields GP workforce was becoming more stable.

"This is great news and a positive sign for the region, however, recruiting doctors is only half the challenge. Keeping them in rural communities is what ultimately delivers continuity of care for patients," Professor Elliott said.

"When doctors stay longer, communities benefit. Patients are able to build ongoing relationships with their GP, practices have greater stability, and experienced doctors are more likely to take on mentoring, supervision and leadership roles."

The improved retention coincided with strong workforce growth. The number of GPs working in the Goldfields increased from 68 to 80 between November 2024 and November 2025 - the largest proportional increase of any region in rural Western Australia.

Professor Elliott said workforce attraction and retention were influenced by many factors, including professional support, community connections and opportunities for ongoing education and development.

One initiative supporting retention in the region is the Goldfields Health Professionals Network, led by Rural Health West.

The Goldfields Health Professionals Network brings together doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and other health workers through regular networking, education and professional development activities designed to strengthen connections across the health workforce.

"The Goldfields Health Professionals Network has developed a particularly strong and active medical membership," Professor Elliott said.

"We know that professional isolation can be a significant challenge for rural health professionals. Creating opportunities for doctors to connect with colleagues, share experiences and build professional relationships helps strengthen both workforce wellbeing and retention."

Almost 600 health professionals are members of the Goldfields Health Professionals Network, which forms part of statewide network of more than 5,500 rural health professionals.

While workforce challenges remain across rural Western Australia, Professor Elliott said the latest figures demonstrated what can be achieved through sustained investment in recruitment, training and retention initiatives.

"The latest data suggests the Goldfields workforce is becoming more stable, which is good news for local communities and the health professionals who serve them."

"Workforce sustainability requires ongoing effort, but these results show the region is heading in the right direction."

Rural Health West has been publishing a GP workforce report for 25 years. It is one of the most comprehensive annual analyses of the state's rural GP workforce and supports workforce planning, policy development and advocacy across regional Western Australia.

ENDS

Media contact:

Sarah Fittock, Rural Health West, 0414 225 764

Media Notes:

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, Disability and Ageing.