



# Media Statement

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**8 June 2026**

## **Rural Health West Celebrates Board Chair Gary Smith AM for King's Birthday Honour**

Rural Health West is proud to congratulate our Board Chair, Gary Smith, on being named a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for his significant service to the Indigenous community of Western Australia and to education.

Announced in the 2026 King's Birthday Honours List, the recognition is a reflection of a career spent doing what matters – in corporate boardrooms, university councils, and communities across WA.

As Rural Health West's Chair, his dedication to Aboriginal leadership and equity sits at the heart of the organisation's work. He was present at the inaugural meeting of Rural Health West's Aboriginal Advisory Committee, where he is actively supporting the integration of its work into the organisation's activities.

Mr Smith was appointed Board Chair in October 2025 and has already demonstrated his business acumen along with thoughtful, grounded leadership at Rural Health West.

“Gary brings something rare to leadership - genuine humility and a deep commitment to doing what's right, not just what's easy. It's a privilege to work alongside him, and this honour couldn't go to a more deserving person,” said Professor Catherine Elliott, Chief Executive Officer, Rural Health West

As former State Chairman of KPMG, founding director of the Noongar Advisory Company, and Co-Chair of Reconciliation WA from 2017 to 2024, Mr Smith has spent decades lending his expertise in causes beyond the boardroom.

As director of the WA Aboriginal Leadership Institute for nearly nine years, and as Chancellor of Murdoch University for five years, he built a remarkable record of services across First Nations leadership and higher education.

## **ENDS**

### **Media contact:**

Sarah Fittock

0414 225 764

sarah.fittock@ruralhealthwest.com.au

### **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.*