



Wudinna District Council

Medical Services Update – 24 May 2022

Where are We At?

Working with the Eyre Far North Local Health Network, we are getting towards the final stages of EFNLHN Board approvals seeking to secure up to three days per week of a GP Outreach Service to be delivered from our Wudinna Health Centre. Some of our people may have heard an early indication of this approach on a recent EFNLHN ABC Radio briefing. If this recommendation is adopted at their next Board meeting, the aim is to commence during June this year.

A Question You May be Asking

What is the difference between an Outreach Service and Locum Services?

An Outreach Service aims to provide one consistent GP that visits the community on a regular basis. A Locum service is secured when there is a GP available that wants to come to a community – often used as relief for a local GP.

Continuing the Search for a Permanent GP

Council with the support from Dr Scott Lewis and Tim Scholz (Mid West Health & Aged Care Inc Committee) as stated in a previous update have engaged the services of a United Kingdom Dr Recruiting Agency to recruit a GP to come to Australia, and once they have met all the required approvals, mentoring etc to then reside and work from the Wudinna Health Centre. We have been notified that to date one expression of interest has been received. Please remember developing a relationship and approvals can be a lengthy process, but one we need to nurture along.

Council have also agreed to support the attempts of Rural & Remote Medical Services (RARMS) as their Director, Mr Mark Burdack travels to England to promote opportunities for GPs to come and work in rural and remote Australia.

The EFNLHN are aware we are taking the overseas recruiting approach and are supportive of our local recruiting attempts.

There are also Australian Government incentives to try and attract GPs to country locations, with no results yet for our districts. People may also recall that Dr Scott advertised within Australia for two years with a very generous package for a GP to come to Wudinna, that offer was not taken up.

A Question You May be Asking

Why don't Council Minutes show all the details of the processes Council is going through in trying to secure a resident GP or interim support of Outreach or Locum Services?

Under the Local Government Act whenever a Council is dealing with Contracts of service, Lease documents, Legal issues, employment, and related finances we are required to close the meeting to Public (go into camera) and the discussion, leases, other people's financials are required to be kept confidential until an agreed release date.

Some Thankyous

I would like to thank our local CWA Branch for taking a proactive approach in writing to their State CWA Organisation seeking lobbying assistance from the whole of CWA to the Minister for Health seeking support and the urgent need of a GP at Wudinna. CWA provided a copy for Council records, and we look forward to the response they receive.

Another **big thank you** to our Nurses and all Health staff, visiting Locum at the Hospital and Community Health Services for the care and support they are providing to the public, Trudinger Residents, and visitors requiring assistance – thank you so much, your work is appreciated by us all. Also, thanks to the Hospital Auxiliary Committee and helpers for the fantastic garden makeover on the Hospital grounds – it looks great.

Eleanor Scholz
MAYOR