

**To the people of Julia Creek and the wider McKinlay Shire,**

The North West Hospital and Health Service (NWHHS) regrets the necessary temporary downgrading of the Julia Creek Multi Purpose Health Service (MPHS) from a Level 2 facility to a Level 1 facility. Basically, this means the withdrawal of Inpatient and residential Aged Care capacity from the MPHS while we are experiencing a shortage in nursing numbers. A shortage of nursing means we are unable to staff the overnight shift in order to meet the overnight needs of residents and inpatients. All other services remain available at the MPHS.

The current issues are not specific only to Julia Creek, they are being experienced in other parts of the NWHHS, as well as more widely across Queensland, and even nationally. While it is the result of an issue outside of all of our control, it remains the responsibility of the NWHHS to return to business as normal, when we are able, and as soon as we are able to. In the meantime, I understand there are some concerns about the Julia Creek MPHS long term. I can advise all residents there is no intention by the NWHHS Board to permanently close the Julia Creek MPHS. Our focus remains on our staff and the health services provided to the community while we work towards a restoration of both to the MPHS.

I also appreciate some anxiety around the shortage of notice of these changes and the manner of consultation with you, the community. I accept responsibility that due to the urgency of the situation this message just had to go out as soon as possible, but that I could have addressed this with you better and in person. Please accept my sincere apologies and of course I remain available to anyone at any time should you have any further ongoing concerns that we have been unable to address.

In the meantime, as the NWHHS works through this situation, please support your hospital as we always have, in particular, the staff. As professionals, all staff continue to have your best interests front of their mind as they too work through this. There is no blame to be allocated for this situation, it is a perfect storm of a number of issues, but as I have mentioned it remains the responsibility of the NWHHS to resolve it as soon as we are better placed to be able to do so. During this time we will keep our staff, the Mayor and Council, Community Advisory Group, and the wider community informed as soon as we are able to ourselves.

**Paul Woodhouse**  
Board Chair