



CENTRAL NSW  
COUNCILS

**CENTROC**

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

Date of Release: 11 Nov 2014

Approved by: Cr Ken Keith, Chair of Centroc and Mayor of Parkes Shire Council

---

## **DYING YOUNGER IN THE BUSH ALARMING WESTERN NSW HEALTH STATS**

Alarming health statistics released recently show life expectancy in rural NSW is now among the worst in the country. An article published today in the Sydney Morning Herald says that a person in remote Western NSW can expect to live a shorter life than a person in North Korea or Iraq.

Executive officer of Western NSW Local Health District, Scott McLachlan, confirmed that life expectancy rates in Western NSW are dire.

“The numbers are terrible but no surprise,” he said. “The major problem in our region is lifestyle related – smoking, obesity and diabetes. We are putting considerable effort into combating the problem.”

According to NSW Health Statistics, the average man in Western NSW dies almost three years earlier than NSW counterpart, and women almost two years earlier. Australian Bureau of Statistics numbers confirm the trend.

Life Expectancy 2013 – Source ABS

Area	Males	Females
NSW Average	80.0	84.3
Central NSW	78.1	83.5
Western NSW	76.2	81.3

Centroc Chair and Mayor of Parkes, Cr Ken Keith, said the health is a matter of urgency in Western NSW.

“Central NSW Councils are working closely with state and federal agencies to improve health services in this region,” said Cr Keith. “It is simply not good enough that people living in regional and remote areas of this country have such serious health concerns. The further from major centres we go, the worse it gets.”

“As well as addressing specific lifestyle related health issues of this region such as smoking and diabetes, we need to ensure we have a stronger health workforce and our people have access to the health services they require.”



CENTRAL NSW  
COUNCILS

**CENTROC**

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

Centroc is currently working with its member councils and Newcrest Mining's Cadia Valley Operations on a unique destination based regional health workforce recruitment campaign called Beyond the Range which will be launched early next year.

Last year, Western NSW Local Health District and Western Medicare Local worked collaboratively to publish a "Western NSW Health Needs Assessment" which found the key areas of concern contributing to shorter life expectancies in the region were; smoking, nutrition, physical activity and obesity, diabetes and mental health services.

"We can't afford to keep hiding our heads in the sand," said Cr Keith. "We can't ignore the huge impact lifestyle choices have on our health, our lives and our economy, and we have a duty to ensure people in regional areas have access to the health services and workforce they deserve."

ENDS

---

**For media enquiry:** For comment please contact Jenny Bennett 0428 690 935