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Approved by: Cr Bill West, Chair of Centroc and Mayor of Cowra Shire Council

New Primary Health Networks have promise – but Western NSW boundary size still too vast at 2/3 of state!

After months of speculation, the Federal Government yesterday finally released the new Primary Health Network (PHN) Approach to Market tender. This follows the release a few weeks ago of the very large new Western PHN boundary, which will replace a number of smaller Medicare Local boundaries.

The current Western Medicare Local has formed a Primary Health Network “design partnership” with key stakeholders to develop a tender for the new organisation that builds on the strength of existing relationship, programs and capabilities.

“Although we fully support Western Medicare Local and the new Primary Health Network design partnership, Centroc still holds grave concerns about the vast size of the proposed Western PHN boundary,” said Centroc Chair, Cr Bill West. “We believe smaller PHN boundaries are needed to connect regional communities to critical health services.”

“Centroc is pleased to see the government has finally released the scope and criteria for the tender,” said Cr West. “We have been very vocal in our concern about the need for the new Primary Health Network to incorporate existing networks and to provide critical continuity of service to our communities.”

“Having the tender criteria released means our existing Western Medicare Local group and various stakeholders can now get on with the job of developing a strong proposal for the new PHN,” said Cr West.

Following a Federal Government review, 30 new Primary Health Networks will replace the current 61 Medicare Locals across Australia. The new Western Primary Health Network boundary represents almost 2/3 of the state of NSW. In NSW, there will be nine PHN and the Western PHN will begin operating in 1st July 2015.

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