

SOUTHLAKES MEDICAL GROUP

A.B.N. 28792697967 ACN: 151 499 106

Postal Address: P.O. Box 5007, DORA CREEK, NSW, 2264

8 Doree Place, DORA CREEK 2264
Ph: (02) 4973 1877 Fax: (02) 4970 5566

Shop 5 Morisset Square, 35 Yambo St, Morisset 2264
Ph: (02) 4017 2101 Fax: (02) 4017 2102

Shop 13, 559 Freemans Dr, COORANBONG 2265
Ph: (02) 4977 3235 Fax: (02) 4977 1754

75 Macquarie Rd, MANNERING PARK 2259
Ph: (02) 4359 1293 Fax: (02) 4359 2330

25 French Rd, WANGI WANGI 2267
Ph: (02) 4975 1455 Fax: (02) 4975 1419

10 Doree Place, DORA CREEK 2264
Ph: (02) 4913 1734

DOCTOR SHORTAGE RESULTING IN A SHORTFALL OF READILY AVAILABLE APPOINTMENTS

Our practice (along with other medical practices in this area) is currently suffering from a shortage of Doctors. Unfortunately, this means we no longer have enough readily available appointments in order to cater for the needs of the residents in this fast growing community. We are very aware that this situation is extremely frustrating for you as the patient. Please know that it is even more frustrating for our doctors and staff, who are working under immense pressure as they try desperately to cope with the patient demand.

We have been advertising for in excess of ten years to attract Doctors with Fellowship (Specialist Registration) to our practice. This advertising has been done extensively via Australian medical magazines, local primary health networks, the rural doctors network, online employment sites and recruitment agencies. To date, we have not been successful in our endeavor of this. We have been informed by the recruitment agencies that we have engaged to assist us with the recruitment of Doctors, that there is a major shortage of General Practitioners with Fellowship in Australia.

For the last 30 plus years, in an effort to reduce the major shortage of General Practitioners with Fellowship in our region, our practice has committed as an approved training practice for General Practitioners. This has placed a lot of extra work onto the senior Doctors in our practice, in order to comply with the supervision and education standards that are required to train GP's. It was however felt to be a worthwhile cause. To date though, our practice still has not seen any benefit from providing this service, as we still have not been able to attract General Practitioners with Fellowship to join our practice and work in this great location.

More recently, we extended our GP training to include Sponsorship of International Medical Graduates, in an attempt to reduce our shortage of doctors. These doctors make a long term commitment to the area. We supervise and train these doctors to meet the needs of our community. However due to Government legislation, when these doctors become permanent residents they are forced to work in more remote areas, leaving us **again short of doctors**. Those that are able to get an Exemption are only able to work in our area for a limited time until they receive their General Registration. Then they are again, forced to leave before being able to obtain their Fellowship which will allow them to work in our area. **The current policies do not assist our community and need to be changed.** Practices that are dedicated to training doctors, should have the opportunity to continue to train them until they reach their Fellowship, at which point they can remain working in the area unrestricted, instead of being forced to move from the community they have been dedicated to serving.

The health and wellbeing of the residents in this community is of the utmost importance to us. We have therefore written to the Honorary Greg Hunt, Minister for Health, requesting his help to increase the number of General Practitioners working in this area. To date though, we have not received a response. **If you are frustrated that you weren't able to obtain your appointment in a timely manner, we would appreciate if you could also contact the Minister for Health, in an attempt to further help with our cause.** Our Reception staff can supply you with a pre typed letter for your completion or alternately you can submit this via a link on our website.

We thank you in anticipation and we sincerely appreciate your understanding at this difficult time.

Management.