**Abstract submitted for the 4th Rural Health and Research Congress**

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**Congress Stream:** No 6. Connecting through transfer – right care, right place, right time

**Alternate Stream:** N/A

**Abstract Title: Caring for Country Kids**

**Authors:** NSW Kids and Families, North Sydney, NSW Australia

**Prof Les White,** NSW Chief Paediatrician

**Margaret Kelly,** Senior Manager Paediatric Healthcare

**Duncan Newman,** Analyst Paediatric Healthcare

**Background**

In NSW, approximately 80% of paediatric presentations to emergency departments occur outside the specialist children’s hospitals, with about 30% presenting in Regional areas of NSW. The *Supporting NSW Paediatric Service Capability Project*, led by NSW Kids and Families, is taking a whole of system and long term approach to improving paediatric care in NSW as well as targeting critical areas for immediate action.

**Approach**

One critical area for action is *Caring for Country Kids*. This priority initiative aims to improve local care and timely escalation of paediatric patients in rural settings. A working group is determining solutions that will support implementation of the particular paediatric components of the Guide to Paediatric Clinical Emergency Responses (CERs) and Beyond Facility Escalation Documentation contained within NSW Health Policy Directive PD2013\_049 *Recognition and Management of Patients who are Clinically Deteriorating.* Other opportunities for local support and escalation will also be explored.

**Outcomes / Results**

This presentation will report on the outcomes of the *Caring for Country Kids* working group and implementation plan, including activities, tools and resources to support decision making at the point of care.

**Take home message**

A consistent, stepped approach to escalation of care across rural NSW will enhance safety and appropriateness of care for all sick children.