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*This is a 'keeping connected' initiative of 'Advancing health service delivery through workforce': A strategy for Queensland 2017-2026*

Included in this issue:

- peer-reviewed articles of interest
- links to reports and opinion pieces
- events and updates

## Articles of interest

### Responsive policies needed to secure rural supply from increasing female doctors: a perspective

Globally, the proportion of females taking up a career in medicine is increasing. In Australia, females now account for 53% of medical school graduates. Despite this increase in female graduates the proportion of female doctors working in rural areas has not increased. Drawing from a mixture of literature and expert practice networks this paper sought to provide a perspective on female specific rural medical workforce issues.

To assist in the attraction and retention of female doctors to rural areas the three policy themes were identified: re-visioning rural recruitment; using employment arrangements that attract females; and rural training and specialty choice.

This paper identified the factors that attract females to a career in rural medicine are different to those that attract males. Gender neutral attraction and retention policies were found to be less effective than policies tailored specifically to the practitioner's gender.

A number of ideas were provided to assist in the attraction and retention of female doctors to rural areas including implementation of professional networks and peer supports, evaluation of job and childcare co-design opportunities, and consideration of job opportunities for partners.

[Find out more](#)

### Factors influencing medical radiation science graduates' early career principal place of practice: a retrospective cohort study

This study explored the factors which influenced the registered principle place of practice (PPP) in 2019 of

medical radiation science (MRS) graduates from the University of Newcastle. This MRS specific study utilised student enrolment and professional placement data from an overarching nursing and allied health study to explore the association with graduate PPP.

As has been identified in other similar studies, graduates with a rural background were more likely to be practicing rurally than those of a major city origin. The study also identified that radiography graduates were more likely to work rurally than graduates in radiation therapy or nuclear medicine due largely to the employment availability in these locations.

To improve the percentages of graduates working in rural locations, the proactive recruitment of students from a rural background to study MRS is recommended.

As the growth and demand for radiation services continues to increase within regional and rural areas, so will the career pathway options for graduates of radiation therapy or nuclear medicine.

[Find out more](#)

### Addressing the oral health workforce needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make up approximately 0.5% of the total dental workforce within Australia. Modelling suggests that a further 700 Aboriginal and Torres Strait dental practitioners would be required to reach population parity, with a quadrupling of current graduate numbers required to reach parity within 20 years.

This paper provides a couple of options to help with the needed increase in numbers. These options include further embedding cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by the Australian dental schools within their curriculum, and increasing the number and value of financial support incentives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students pursuing a career in dentistry.

Increasing the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dental practitioners requires both a strategic approach and additional government investment. The improvement of partnerships between non-Aboriginal



and Torres Strait Islander healthcare providers and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is critical to improve immediate primary healthcare outcomes within these communities.

[Find out more](#)

## The community nurse in Australia. Who are they? A rapid systematic review

The purpose of this study is to profile the community nurse in Australia and subsequently it highlights the nursing workforce shortage the community health sector is facing.

Although this study has identified some data limitations, the modelling indicates that the majority of nurses in the community sector are part-time, identify as female, and it is anticipated that over 50% are considering leaving the sector either through retirement or resignation over the next ten years.

Ensuring a sustainable community nursing workforce will require several strategies, including the recruitment of newly graduated and mid-level clinicians, and providing clarity of the role, its scope of practice, and the available career pathways within the sector.

[Find out more](#)

## Collaborative Care: Primary health workforce and service delivery in Western New South Wales – A case study.

Utilising a collaborative approach to workforce planning through the implementation of a collaborative care framework, this case study explored how four rural towns in Western New South Wales are addressing access to quality and sustainable healthcare.

Engagement of the community through the utilisation of the community-based development model was critical in ensuring the community took ownership of the initiatives.

Although this case study is an ongoing piece of work with no longitudinal data available, it provides a clear methodology for how a collaborative care framework can be developed with each step of the development process analysed through the lens of this specific case study.

Initial results from this study indicate that the collaborative care framework is a useful planning and community engagement tool. It can assist in the building of health workforce literacy and provide direct impacts on system change at the local level.

This paper provides a valuable addition to the body of knowledge available on developing practical workforce models for the primary healthcare system.

[Find out more](#)

More information on workforce planning in Queensland Health can be accessed via the [Health Workforce Information Gateway \(HeWI\)](#).

## Events

### Preventative Health Conference 2022

11 – 13 May 2022

Brisbane

[Find out more](#)

### International Conference on Healthcare Informatics and Medical Ethics

16 – 17 May 2022

Sydney

[Find out more](#)

### Royal Australasian & New Zealand College of Psychiatrists 2022 Congress

15 – 19 May 2022

Sydney

[Find out more](#)

## Food for thought

### Nursing: a profession under "enormous stress"

<https://www.hospitalhealth.com.au/content/nursing/article/nursing-a-profession-under-enormous-stress--1513884709>

### "Return of the unexpected" Rural workforce recruitment and retention in the era of COVID-19

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/ajr.12817>

### Australian Medical Association's Vision for Australia's Health

<https://ama.com.au/sites/default/files/2021-06/ama-vision-for-aus-health.pdf>

### PODCAST: Diversity in the Australian Health Workforce

<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/News/2021-02-16-Diversity-in-the-health-workforce-podcast.aspx>

### They're the frontline: new model of care aims to attract health professionals to rural Australia

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/sep/24/theyre-the-frontline-new-model-of-care-aims-to-attract-health-professionals-to-rural-australia>

## Contact

We welcome your comments and contributions. Please contact us at

[healthworkforce@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:healthworkforce@health.qld.gov.au)