

#### Included in this issue:

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

## Articles of interest

### Mental Health Crises in Rural and Remote Australia: An Assessment of Direct Medical Costs of Air Medical Retrievals and the Implications for the Societal Burden

Available mental health services in rural and remote Australia are not adequate and the direct medical costs for mental health related air medical retrievals is unknown. This study provides evidence on the economic costs of mental health air medical retrievals finding that the majority of costs incurred were associated with hospital admission and treatment.

In 2017, 122 primary evacuations and 926 interhospital transfers occurred for mostly psychotic disorders, including schizophrenia. The total direct medical costs were estimated to be \$20,070,527. However, the indirect and intangible costs such as social costs are likely to be far greater.

These findings are important in assessing the costs associated with the current approaches to mental health service provision in rural and remote communities.

[Find out more](#)

### Telehealth – Improving access for rural, regional and remote communities

This article discusses the importance of a whole-of-Government approach to enable infrastructure to facilitate full functionality of digital health initiatives. Despite rapidly changing uptake of telehealth services due to the COVID-19 response, there remains inconsistency with bandwidth and connectivity for regional, rural, and remote communities. The study provides examples of innovative uses of

telehealth and suggests improvements to the quality of telehealth services offered in other areas of healthcare.

[Find out more](#)

### Networked health care: Rethinking value creation in learning health care systems

Creating better value in health care service is challenging and service redesign is important for future sustainability. This paper proposes a networked architecture that can mobilise and integrate the resources of health care professionals, patients, and other community members in the delivery and improvement of health care systems. Rethinking the assumptions underlying value creation in health care service systems is a priority. The design must allow shared decision-making that honours patient preferences, is enabled by combinations of networking technology and people, and allows dynamic matching of resources and activities to patients and treatment solutions.

[Find out more](#)

### Evaluation of a nursing and midwifery exchange between rural and metropolitan hospitals: A mixed methods study

There are barriers for rural and remote nurses and midwives to be prepared for specialist roles and practice. This paper reports on the findings of the Queensland Nursing and Midwifery Exchange Program which facilitates clinical skills development and collaboration between metropolitan and rural and remote health services.

Overall, the exchange program participants reported that it improves professional development opportunities, supports practical collaboration, and raises the profile of nursing and midwifery in rural areas.

[Find out more](#)

## Setting priorities for rural allied health in Australia: a scoping review

Allied health care is poorly accessible in rural areas worldwide. This review aims to inform policy and research priorities for increasing access to rural allied health services.

A scoping review of published, peer reviewed literature was obtained from six databases between 1999 to 2019. Most rural practitioners had rural backgrounds and required rural-specific skills. While training opportunities have increased over the years with short-term placements, rural youth faced barriers to accessing allied health courses. The study shows that high quality placement experiences were linked with returning students and practitioners. Outreach and telehealth models improve distribution of services and require strong local coordination; and collaboration for patient-centred care planning with clear referral pathways leads to better health outcomes.

There are three key policy areas to be considered and these are focused around improving rural jobs, pathways for training skilled workers, and networked service models.

[Find out more](#)

## Facilitating credentialing and engagement of international physician-migrants during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond

International medical graduates (IMGs) are an important talent pool in Australia, the United States of America and across the world, yet visa delays are a significant barrier for doctors qualified to assist during critical times. This article explores these barriers and the potential solutions, including internationally standardised competency-based basic professional recognition. Lessons learned from the responses to the COVID-19 pandemic can become part of a comprehensive plan for international healthcare systems.

[Find out more](#)

## Events

### Australian Rural and Remote Mental Health Symposium

26-28 October 2020  
Canberra

[Find out more](#)

### Palliative Care in Queensland Annual Summit

26 November 2020  
Hilton Hotel, Brisbane

[Find out more](#)

### Rural Medicine Australia Conference

24-27 February 2021  
Hunter Valley

[Find out more](#)

### Indigenous Chronic Diseases Conference

17-19 November 2021  
Pullman Hotel, Cairns

[Find out more](#)

## Food for thought

### Salary of Australian Doctors

<https://advancedmed.com.au/blog/salary-of-australian-doctors-surgeons/>

### Medical Schools Outcomes Database Reports

<https://medicaldeans.org.au/data/medical-schools-outcomes-database-reports/>

### A passion for public health in a pandemic

<https://www.ruralhealth.org.au/partyline/article/passion-public-health-pandemic>

### Report on Government Services 2020 (Revised June 2020)

<https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2020/health>

### Federal departments had no specific COVID plan for aged care: royal commission counsel

<https://theconversation.com/federal-departments-had-no-specific-covid-plan-for-aged-care-royal-commission-counsel-144204>

### Call to improve remote, rural health outcomes

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/special-reports/call-to-improve-remote-rural-health-outcomes/news-story/36c7f0b40ffbe54240db6e887b5e4c63>

## Contact

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