

Special edition – rural and remote workforce

Included in this issue:

- announcement of the Office of Rural Health
- peer-reviewed articles of interest
- Grow Your Own workforce website

Office of Rural Health

The Queensland Government announced a new Office of Rural Health will be established to give a stronger voice and more visibility to the issues facing rural and regional Queensland and will drive improvements for rural and remote health planning, patient access, workforce planning and reporting.

[Find out more](#)

Articles of interest

Costs and effects of higher turnover of nurses and Aboriginal health practitioners and higher use of short-term nurses in remote Australian primary care services: an observational cohort study

High turnover of health staff is costly and associated with poorer health outcomes for Aboriginal peoples living in remote communities. This study found that a high reliance on agency nurses in the Northern Territory is very likely to be cost-ineffective and associated with higher hospitalisation rates. The study concluded that a range of workforce strategies to retain resident nurses and Aboriginal health practitioners in remote clinics is needed.

[Find out more](#)

Local regional workforce returns on investment of a locally governed and delivered general practice vocational training program

Australian graduates are more likely to remain in a regional setting following positive local training experiences. This study evaluated the workforce retention in regions resulting from the implementation of the Australian General Practice (GP) Training (AGPT) program.

The study results indicated that 53% of medical graduates are practicing in rural locations after becoming a specialist GP and 40% returned to practice in metropolitan areas. The Australian medical graduates were more than twice as likely to remain in a rural practice than international medical graduates. The study determined that a regional training provider is a significant local asset introducing potential GPs to the region.

[Find out more](#)

Rural pharmacy workforce: Influence of curriculum and clinical placement on pharmacists' choice of rural practice

Data from 92 participants informed the study results showing that two-thirds of the rural pharmacy workforce choice of practice location was influenced by positive clinical placement experiences. Other influences included rural lifestyle, family commitments, remuneration, and career opportunities, and these have had a greater effect on the study group than university education.

The study concluded that universities have a role to play in better preparing students for rural pharmacy practice through rural-focused curriculum.

[Find out more](#)

Are all rural placements created equal? A national study of placement experiences among multidisciplinary health students

The National Rural Health Student Network conducted a survey to determine the quality and accessibility of rural placements and how this varies between health student disciplines. A total 565 students had undertaken a rural placement.

The study found that a poor rural placement can turn students away from rural practice, and exposure to clinical and professional opportunities unique to a rural setting had a positive influence. Analysis indicated that non-medical students had significantly less rural placement support, including financial, mental health, and social support; or a health service or community orientation.

[Find out more](#)

Building general practice training capacity in rural and remote Australia with underserved primary care services: a qualitative investigation

This study explores the factors influencing general practitioners (GPs), primary care doctors, and GP registrars to work and train in remote towns.

A qualitative approach led by James Cook University identified four main themes: supervised learning; impact of working in a remote context; work-life balance; fostering remote practice. Analysis findings included that Registrars enjoyed working to top of scope and in a setting where they can see they are making a difference; and local community integration was a key factor to retaining the workforce.

[Find out more](#)

Contact

We welcome your comments and contributions. Please contact us at

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[Grow Your Own workforce](#) is a place-based workforce model that focuses on attracting, developing, supporting and retaining local residents to create a sustainable pipeline of workers.

Events

[Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium](#)

25-26 May 2020

Alice Springs

[National Rural and Remote Allied Health Conference \(SARRAH\)](#)

13-15 September 2020

Townsville

[Rural and Remote Mental Health Symposium](#)

26-28 October 2020

Canberra

Food for thought

Mission Australia Youth Survey Report 2019.

From city to country: Comparing major cities and regional areas

<https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/what-we-do/research-impact-policy-advocacy/youth-survey>

Queensland Health

Advancing Kidney Care 2026 Plan

<https://clinicaexcellence.qld.gov.au/priority-areas/service-improvement/advancing-kidney-care-2026/advancing-kidney-care-2026-plan>

World Health Organization

Increasing access to health workers in remote and rural areas through improved retention: Global policy recommendations

<https://www.who.int/hrh/retention/guidelines/en/>

The Australian - Bush Crisis: locals shun GP careers

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/bush-crisis-locals-shun-gp-careers/news-story/2833b36eda447d242206cf5db36b3dd5?btr=38ad4c34a034bc70bbbd3d8ef7fd8c2a>