



**Rural Doctors Association
of Queensland**
“Caring for the Country”

Media Release 28th June 2011

New leader for Queensland’s rural medicos

The newly elected President of the Rural Doctors Association of Queensland was ideally placed to advocate for more health services, closer to home for country patients, according to Dr Dan Halliday, immediate past president of the RDAQ.

“We’re all honoured that Dr Ewen McPhee of Emerald offered his candidacy for the RDAQ Presidency,” Dr Halliday said. “Ewen has been a passionate campaigner for procedural services in his home town of Emerald and for rural Queenslanders generally.”

“Health Infrastructure in Rural areas is struggling,” Dr McPhee said. “Massive growth in my own town of Emerald is driven by the mining industry but placing excessive strain on the Public and Private Health Workforce. But why is it that measures of health equality consistently see rural people lag behind their city cousins? We need to bring our messages to the ears of Parliamentarians.”

Dr McPhee has lived in Emerald since 1989 and has been a medical administrator, manager and teacher as well as the only remaining procedural GP in Emerald.

“In Emerald, Obstetric Emergencies happen and have to be managed and our experience is not unique. I know that serious adverse events could happen any time with dire consequences for mothers and babies. There is not always the time to call the flying doctor and certainly no time to send the patient on a road trip. It’s having skilled doctors and nurses on the ground that saves lives.”

“I often ask the question ‘Who will be here to replace me?’” he says. “I support Queensland Health’s Rural Generalist Training Program wholeheartedly, but I also champion the independence and challenge of general practice. Country Queensland needs a steady supply of doctors with procedural and office-based skills to protect the health of our communities.”

Dr McPhee sees many challenges on the horizon as State and Federal Health Departments attempt to find solutions. “I look forward to working with RDAQ as one voice that can challenge and question those changes to the betterment of our patients lives and support the Rural health Workforce.”

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