

15 June 2017

National Rural Health Commissioner a reality following Senate vote

The Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) has welcomed last night's passing of legislation by the Senate to create the role of National Rural Health Commissioner.

"We strongly commend the Federal Government for acting so quickly on our advocacy to create this role, and we also commend Labor, the Greens and the other parliamentary representatives for their support of this important legislation" RDAA President, Dr Ewen McPhee, said.

"The inaugural National Rural Health Commissioner has real potential to bring about significant, positive reforms in the rural health sector.

"He or she will play a particularly important role in rebalancing the maldistribution of doctors and other health professionals between urban and rural Australia — and through its role in developing and implementing the Government's promised National Rural Generalist Pathway, help to deliver the next generation of doctors with advanced skills to rural and remote communities."

"We are looking forward to working with and supporting the Commissioner in this initial priority to progress development of the Pathway, as well as continuing to assist in the development of other strategies to build the rural health workforce, not only for doctors but also for nursing and allied health.

"Additionally, this role will play a crucial role in the wider challenges facing rural healthcare, including improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and boosting mental healthcare access in the bush," Dr McPhee said.

"We are highly appreciative of the combined good-will of the Parliament in getting behind the creation of the role of National Rural Health Commissioner.

"We look forward to working with the Government as it gets this important role underway."

A high resolution photo of Dr Ewen McPhee is available here:

www.rdaa.com.au/sites/default/files/public/pictures/Dr%20Ewen%20McPhee.jpg

Available for interview:

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