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Investment in rural health welcome news for the bush

The Coalition's announcement of over \$54million to be invested in rural health training will provide enormous opportunities to build the rural medical workforce of the future.

Dr Ewen McPhee, President of the Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA), said that the funding will play an important role in providing access for more medical and allied health students to experience the benefits of working in rural and remote areas.

"The funding is aimed at boosting clinical training in regional Australia by the way of 26 Regional Health Training Hubs and three new University Departments of Rural Health," Dr McPhee said.

"It is another important step towards addressing the maldistribution of the medical workforce across Australia.

"This initiative, along with the announcement of the Rural Health Commissioner, a National Rural Generalist Pathway and the Rural Junior Doctor Innovation Fund supporting General Practice intern rotations, are all critical elements in what must be a multi dimensional approach to addressing this very complex and challenging issue."

"No matter which area of health you work in, there can be enormous rewards and benefits to working in rural communities.

"This Coalition initiative will expand the opportunities available to students and allow them to experience rural and remote health care in a supported, integrated program.

"We know that experiencing quality training experiences in rural and remote areas plays a vital role in attracting health practitioners to the bush.

"With more students now having access to rural health training throughout their studies, it is essential that we work towards building the capacity of rural medical practices to take on more junior doctors and enable them to complete their training in a rural setting," Dr McPhee said.

Rural medical practices play a vital role in the training of medical students and junior doctors, but there is significant opportunity for rural and remote health services to play a greater role in training interns and doctors in the early parts of their careers.

Medical practices that offer training placements gain many benefits in return, such as excellent recruitment opportunities and improved succession planning, as well as adding a rewarding dynamic to an established rural health career.



MEDIA RELEASE

“With the Federal Government working towards ensuring a bright future for rural health services, both rural doctors and the Government need to continue to provide these quality rural training opportunities, and be supported to do so.

“We thank Minister Gillespie for his commitment to rural health and recognise the progress he has made towards delivering Government promises in this area since taking on the role of Assistant Minister for Health,” Dr McPhee said.

“We look forward to the roll out of the new Regional Training Hubs and additional University Departments of Rural Health, and are keen to participate in their development.”

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