

Wednesday 23 October 2013

## Minister Fiona Nash to open major rural doctor conference

**Rural Medicine Australia 2013**

**Next week (31 October to 2 November), Cairns Convention Centre**

[www.ruralmedicineaustralia.com.au](http://www.ruralmedicineaustralia.com.au)

The new Federal Assistant Minister for Health, Senator the Hon. Fiona Nash, will officially open the major Rural Medicine Australia 2013 conference, to be held next week in Cairns.

The annual conference is jointly organised by the Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) and Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM).

This year's conference is set to break all attendance records, with approximately 650 delegates now registered to attend. The conference is being preceded by the first ever World Summit on Rural Generalist Medicine (being held on 30 and 31 October, also in Cairns).

Minister Nash will also present awards to this year's ACRRM Fellows — those doctors who have attained Fellowship of ACRRM through its uniquely broad scope of generalist training and advanced skills within a rural and remote context — and will spend time meeting and talking with delegates following the official opening.

**RDAA President, Dr Sheilagh Cronin, said:** "We are delighted to welcome Minister Nash to officially open our conference. While in Opposition, she demonstrated a strong commitment to building the rural doctor workforce and improving access to healthcare across regional, rural and remote Australia — amongst many other things, she was a driving force behind the Senate inquiry into *The factors affecting the supply of health services and medical professionals in rural areas*. We greatly valued being able to engage with Minister Nash in Opposition, and look forward to working with her now in Government."

**ACRRM President, Professor Richard Murray, said:** "In the short time since being appointed Federal Assistant Minister for Health, Minister Nash has continued to strongly demonstrate her commitment to engage with, and listen to, those working at the coalface of rural healthcare, including rural doctors. Minister Nash's attendance at Rural Medicine Australia is a case in point. We greatly look forward to welcoming Minister Nash to our conference next week."

Delegates at the Rural Medicine Australia conference will also have the opportunity to hear from and talk with Queensland's Health Minister, the Hon. Lawrence Springborg MP, when he provides a short address to delegates over morning tea on Friday 1 November (10am – 10.45am Qld time, Trade Hall, Cairns Convention Centre).

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**Details of Minister Nash's opening address at RMA 2013 are included below.**

**Keynote speakers presenting on Day 1 of RMA 2013 (Thursday 31 October) are also listed below.**

**Each presentation will be held in the Main Plenary Room, Hall A, Cairns Convention Centre.**

**Professor John Humphreys (8.30am – 9am Qld time)**

Leading researcher on the impact of rurality and remoteness on health service provision and health outcomes, classifying rurality, etc

**Subject:** *Achieving change through research: how rural doctors are leading the way*

*continued...*

**Ms Alison Fairleigh (9am - 9.30am Qld time)**

2013 RIRDC Rural Woman of the Year, mental health consumer activist

**Subject:** *The consumer voice in rural and remote Australia*

**Minister Fiona Nash, Federal Assistant Minister for Health (9.30am - 10.15am Qld time)**

RMA 2013 official opening and presentation of FACRRM Awards

**Emeritus Professor Rick Speare (1.45pm - 2.15pm Qld time)**

Public Health Physician and Veterinary Surgeon. International expert on tropical medicine and infectious diseases

**Subject:** *Don't neglect the NTDs*

**Sister Martin Joseph (2.15pm - 2.45pm Qld time)**

General Surgeon currently working in remote areas of PNG — specialising in TB control and treatment

**Subject:** *Bottom Line Surgery — do the arithmetic!!*

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**Media are encouraged to attend the RMA 2013 conference, including the official conference opening by Minister Nash. Please contact Patrick Daley or Ineke Kuiper to RSVP.**

**Full program for RMA 2013:** [www.ruralmedicineaustralia.com.au](http://www.ruralmedicineaustralia.com.au)

**Full program for the World Summit on Rural Generalist Medicine:** [www.ruralgeneralismsummit.com](http://www.ruralgeneralismsummit.com)

**Available for interview:**

Dr Sheilagh Cronin on 0428 789 604

Professor Richard Murray on 07 3105 8200

RDAA CEO, Jenny Johnson, on 0429 931 120

**Media contacts:**

Patrick Daley on 0408 004 890

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