

## Your Rural Doctors Association: valuable insurance for the future of rural practice



**RURAL DOCTORS  
ASSOCIATION  
OF AUSTRALIA**  
*Caring for the Country*

The Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) and the state Rural Doctors Associations (RDAs) work actively for measures to get and keep more doctors in rural areas and to increase access to healthcare in the bush. Your membership directly assists us to continue this work. Here are just some of the achievements that RDAA and the state RDAs have helped to deliver on your behalf:

### Support packages of up to \$70,000 per year per rural doctor, through measures including:

- federal rural retention payments
- rural practice nurse Practice Incentive Payments
- PIP rurality loadings and additional PIP payments for procedural rural doctors
- a rural differential loading for bulk-billed consultations

### Plus many other supports including:

- annual financial supports for rural doctors to undertake upskilling in procedural and/or emergency medicine
- additional funding for specialist outreach services to rural and remote areas
- indemnity subsidies for procedural rural doctors
- more than a doubling of federal funding through the new National Rural and Remote Medical Infrastructure Fund—and improvements in access to this funding for rural medical practices—to assist in the development and expansion of medical facilities in rural communities
- additional rebates, grants and subsidies to support the provision of after-hours services in the bush
- relocation grants for rural doctors in some states

### We have also...

- established ACRRM and actively supported official recognition of FACRRM
- worked actively for better support measures for female rural doctors, rural specialists and rural locums
- developed models to help make rural medical practices viable
- established professional support networks such as RDAA's Female Doctors Group, Rural Specialists Group and Locums Special Interest Group

### ...and helped achieve:

- a significant increase in GP rebates since 2000
- a doubling of scholarships to assist rural students to study medicine and encourage medical students to experience rural practice
- HECS rebates for doctors who undertake rural or remote practice as post graduates
- a significant financial bonus for GP registrars who commit to rural training
- improved housing support for rural medical trainees
- continuing medical education support for rural medical practitioners

### Our recent achievements include:

- increased incentive payments for rural procedural GPs
- the initial concept for—and development and co-management of—the very successful Specialist Obstetricians Locum Scheme, which is now being expanded to provide affordable locum support to rural GP obstetricians and rural GP anaesthetists as well as rural specialist obstetricians
- running a very successful campaign with the Rural Doctors Association of South Australia against a plan by the SA Government to downgrade up to 43 rural hospitals across the state.
- authorisation by the ACCC for RDAA and the state RDAs to collectively negotiate contracts for rural generalists and rural GPs providing services in public hospitals and health facilities. The authorisation is the result of an application made by RDAA to the ACCC in late 2007.
- rural-specific Medicare items, including one to fund antenatal checks by nurses, midwives and registered Aboriginal Health Workers on behalf of a GP or specialist in rural and remote Australia
- the initial concept for—and joint development of—a National Consensus Framework on Rural Maternity Services to guide policy and planning for sustainable rural maternity services

Your state Rural Doctors Association and RDAA continue to work actively to build on these achievements. Please become an RDA member, help support the organisations that support you, and benefit from a great range of member discounts.

Visit [www.rdaa.com.au](http://www.rdaa.com.au) (go to Members) or tel: 1800 239 354 for further information on joining your RDA.