



**RURAL DOCTORS
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Australian College
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Medicine

Media release

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Attention: Western Australian / health / rural media

Revolutionary GP registrar named Rural Registrar of the Year 2009

A Kalgoorlie-based GP registrar who is revolutionising rural obstetric training and Indigenous antenatal care has been awarded the Westpac RDAA-ACRRM Rural Registrar of the Year Award for 2009.

Dr Kylie Sterry received the award at the Rural Doctors Association of Australia's and Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine's national *Rural Medicine Australia 2009* conference, held in Melbourne over the weekend.

Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) President, Dr Jeff Ayton, said Dr Sterry is an inspirational example of how an energetic and innovative registrar can change the face of rural and remote GP training.

"Unable to upskill to the Advanced Diploma of Obstetrics and become a GP Obstetrician in country Western Australia—and unwilling to move to Perth to undergo her training—Kylie persuaded the local specialist obstetrician in Kalgoorlie to teach her operative obstetrics and gynaecology" Dr Ayton said.

"Not only did Kylie lobby for the training course but she helped developed the program, succeeded in seeing it established, then went on to complete the first Advanced Diploma of Obstetrics outside WA's metropolitan hospitals.

"In doing so, she's set up a pathway for other rural GP registrars to follow and achieved something very significant in improving the access of rural women to GP obstetricians, which will eventually allow more women to birth in their own towns."

Dr Sterry said she could see there was a massive opportunity in country areas to do this kind of training, and retain these doctors afterwards.

"I took six months trying to devise a program that would work rurally" she said. "It worked a treat for me, and I can see it's something that could easily be organised and ongoing for others. I basically wanted to encourage doctors to think they could offer the training rurally. I think everyone thought it would be more work, but I showed that I could actually decrease the workload for the specialists by enabling them to have a registrar, which they don't normally have in the country."

On top of this achievement, Dr Sterry has also been recognised for her work in establishing an Indigenous Antenatal Clinic at the Kalgoorlie Aboriginal Medical Service to help address the problem of women receiving minimal antenatal care.

Dr Sterry helped set up antenatal sessions and classes and provided ultrasounds to reinforce the beneficial effects of drug and alcohol abstinence and healthy living.

Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) President, Dr Nola Maxfield, said the response to the clinic has been tremendous with the number of attendees increasing steadily.

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“Not content with revolutionising rural obstetric training and Indigenous antenatal care, Kylie has taken on a part-time role as an educator with her local Rural Clinical School to further her other passion: teaching young students the joys and wide-ranging possibilities of rural procedural practice.

“As well as being an engaging, knowledgeable and highly-skilled registrar, Kylie has demonstrated an enormous passion and dedication to rural procedural practice and has been an inspiration to her supervisors, teachers, colleagues and students.

“She is a very deserving recipient of this year’s Westpac RDAA-ACRRM Rural Registrar of the Year Award.”

Westpac’s Chief Executive, Commercial and Agribusiness, Graham Jennings, said Westpac was proud to support RDAA and its award-winners in 2009.

“Westpac is delighted to support the recognition of dedicated individuals to improving rural and remote health and their outstanding achievements and commitment. As Australia’s oldest bank and first company we have seen over many years the importance of rural centres and how the essential services provided by rural doctors are an integral part of country communities. It is imperative that we work together to ensure continued investment in rural services which sustain healthy economies in regional and rural areas. Westpac looks forward to continuing to provide support to RDAA, its members and rural communities across Australia.”

Dr Jeff Ayton, Dr Nola Maxfield and Dr Kylie Sterry are available for interview.

A photo of Dr Sterry is also available.

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