Rural doctors welcome initial funding for National Rural Generalist Pathway

The Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) has welcomed today's announcement by the Federal Government of $62.2 million over four years to fast track implementation of a National Rural Generalist Pathway for Australia.

RDAA has been a key driver over the past decade for such a Pathway, which will deliver more of the next generation of doctors with advanced skills to rural and remote communities.

"While the funding announced today is less than that recommended by RDAA to fully implement the Pathway, this is nevertheless a positive step forward and will help to get the Pathway up and running" RDAA President, Dr Adam Coltzau, said.

"In this context, it is a significant win for RDAA and for rural doctors and rural communities right around Australia.

"We thank the Coalition, and particularly the National Party - and Federal Health Minister, Greg Hunt MP; Federal Minister for Regional Services, Senator Bridget McKenzie; Nationals Senator Dr David Gillespie MP; and former Nationals Senator Fiona Nash - for getting behind this important initiative.

"We also thank the National Rural Health Commissioner, Professor Paul Worley, and medical organisations that have worked with RDAA in making the Pathway a reality - including the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, and the Australian Medical Association.

"Crucially, we still need to see the fine details behind the Government's announcement.

"We note the Government's announcement that existing programs like the Rural Junior Doctor Training Innovation Fund will comprise part of the rollout of the Pathway.

"Consequently, we need to ensure that this is all new funding that has been announced today, or that existing programs that might comprise part of the total funding for the Pathway will dovetail properly to fully support the future success of the Pathway.

"We also welcome the support shown for a National Rural Generalist Pathway by the Federal Shadow Health Minister, Catherine King MP, and her commitment yesterday that should Labor be elected to government at the forthcoming election, it will honour the funding announced by the Coalition.

"Following the federal election, we'll need to continue discussions with the elected government as to ongoing funding needs for the Program to ensure its full success."

A high resolution photo of Dr Adam Coltzau can be found via this link: https://www.rdaa.com.au/documents/item/182

Available for interview:
RDAA President, Dr Adam Coltzau
RDAA CEO, Peta Rutherford, on 0427 638 374

Media contacts:
Patrick Daley on 0408 004 890
Ineke Kuiper (Thursday / Friday) on 0408 669 638
RDAA National Office on 02 6239 7730