

MURRUMBIDGEE MEDICAL & RIVERINA RURAL TRAINING HUBS

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IN THIS NEWSLETTER



Major Milestone For Local Hubs



Rural Health & Research Congress



Down A Rural Pathway



Training Hub Updates

MAJOR MILESTONE FOR LOCAL HUBS



Our Hubs have made their first submissions for extra local specialist training posts to the Commonwealth. These will be considered as part of the Integrated Rural Training Pipeline (IRTP) program which aims to create new training posts anchored in rural/regional locations.

With help and advice from key stakeholders including clinicians and the specialist Colleges RRTH submitted for Anaesthetics, Emergency Medicine, General Surgery, Rehabilitation Medicine and Orthopaedic Surgery and MMTH submitted EOIs for Dermatology, Nephrology, Geriatric Medicine and Medical Administration

The next stages of the process include assessment by state and regional health bodies before the submissions go to the Colleges involved. The results will be advised in early December.

RECORD NUMBERS IN RIVERINA FOR RURAL HEALTH & RESEARCH CONGRESS



Congress Attendees
L to R:
Damien Limberger MMTH
Fran Trench RRTH
Jill Ludford CEO MLHD and local host
Primary Sponsor James Lamerton CEO MPH

Wagga Wagga welcomed the largest number of delegates yet to attend the Rural Health & Research Congress. The Civic Theatre and its environs, plus wonderful spring weather, provided the ideal setting for discussion and collaboration.

The two local training Hubs made the most of the opportunity to introduce the Regional Training Hubs to as many of the 300 delegates as possible.

Great conversation starters were local wines aptly labelled *Think Outside the Circle*. While we didn't want to open the wine (well not there anyway!), samples of Junee Liquorice Factory chocolates were a great drawcard, allowing us to talk about the region and regional training pathways. Congresses like these which show off the region and local health facilities are a very effective means of "selling" rural study, training and careers.



Hon Brad Hazzard NSW Minister for Health & Medical Research opened the Congress

There were many innovative rural health ideas from presenters including from current and graduate rural medical students and local clinicians. These included Chris Wilson and Catherine Harding's: *Exploring GPs' perceptions of what constitutes rural health*; Dennis Nguyen's *The Utilisation of electronic consultations within remote general practice*; Joe Suttie and Hannah Kempton's *Improving Access to Cardiovascular Screening Technology in Rural Communities*; Catherine Harding & Stephanie Blake's: *UV exposure: Mixed Messages*. Local rural clinicians A/Professors Joe McGirr, John Preddy, Joe Suttie and Adrian Venter and Dr Tom Douch also facilitated sessions.

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UPDATE FROM THE RIVERINA RURAL TRAINING HUB (RRTH)

We are working with the Colleges, local clinicians and health facility staff on submissions for proposed training posts in:

- Emergency Medicine
- Anaesthetics
- Rehabilitation Medicine
- General Surgery
- Orthopaedic Surgery.

We have had talks with JMOs and final year medical students have been afforded the opportunity to explore their own rural study and training pathways. Pathway plans have been developed in:

- GP procedural training
- Refugee Health,
- Emergency Medicine,
- Respiratory Medicine
- Palliative Care

These and any other potential pathways will be part of our webpage. The pathway templates will include links to key sites like the specialist colleges where current information on training can be found.

We also continue to work toward raising Hub profiles and working closely with our key stakeholders. RRTH on behalf of both locally based Hubs, was present at the Annual ACRRM conference RMA17 held this year in Melbourne. The conference program featured themes most relevant to all rural and remote health practitioners.

Two key sessions for the regional hubs were *Gain, Train and Retain : Rural and Remote Workforce Programs and Potential in 2017*. This was a panel discussion facilitated by Prof Jenny May which examined current rural medical workforce challenges.

The second, *Bonded but not alone: translating policy into practical support* explored what works best to support rural bonded scholars, and how regional training hubs could be involved in this. Both these presentations can be found at this link <https://acrrm.eventsair.com>.

Our next commitments to provide information on rural training pathways, are at the **34th Annual Scientific Meeting of ACEM** and the **29th Annual NSW RDN Conference** (RDN).



At the ACEM meeting we have been invited to share a stand with the NSW Ministry of Health. The theme of this meeting *“Impossible is just a perspective”* is apt for the Regional Hubs’ role!. At the RDN Conference at the Crown Plaza, Coogee we will be sharing with the Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) and Murrumbidgee and Mid North Coast Medical Training Hubs at Stand 16. We are not far from either the food or the coffee machine! We are especially looking forward to catching up with medical students on Sunday morning at their forum to discuss rural study and training opportunities in our regions. If you are at either conference please come and say hello, perhaps use us as a **meeting point** to catch up with colleagues.



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A U S T R A L I A

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DOWN A RURAL PATHWAY: LOCAL PAEDIATRICIAN DR THERESA PITTS

Ever since I was very young I knew I wanted to be a doctor. In fact, apparently “doctor” was one of my first words!



I completed an undergraduate degree in Medical Science at the University of Sydney, followed by a Masters in Medical Humanities. I then moved to Brisbane to complete a post graduate MBBS. I was lucky enough to have a cadetship through the Rural Doctors Network during my final two years. This was when my passion for rural medicine began. Each year I would attend the rural medical conferences and be in absolute awe of the skills and attitudes of the rural doctors, mainly general practitioners. I still attend these conferences 12 years later and remain in awe!

Despite the fact I was raised in Sydney, no-one was surprised when I chose Wagga Wagga as the place to do my internship. I loved the community, the patients I dealt with, the support in the hospital and the people I met (many of whom are still close friends today). I further developed my skills as a resident in Wagga – none of my counterparts in the city were doing any of the procedures I was, or having the responsibility of on-call or surgical assisting.

It was while working as a resident in Wagga that I knew that paediatrics was the speciality for me. I moved back to Sydney to complete my Fellowship at Sydney Children’s Hospital. I returned to Wagga as often as I could, as I always knew this was where my heart belonged.

Fast forward seven years, and I am now well-established in Wagga as a paediatrician. I love my work at the (still new and shiny!) Wagga wagga Rural Referral Hospital, as well as doing private paediatric outpatients clinics. I also enjoy teaching students from both university campuses (UNSW and Notre Dame) and being a mentor for our junior doctors. It’s so exciting to watch the progress of medicine in Wagga and even more exciting to think about the future medical services we will be able to provide for the whole Riverina region.

I was lucky enough to meet a lovely Riverina fellow when I moved back to Wagga last year and we are getting married in Wagga next October. We are looking forward to our future together in this friendly community and enjoying all of Wagga’s wonderful activities.

I am so thankful for the fantastic experience I had in Wagga as an intern. This experience accelerated my growth as a doctor and as a person. Although I always dreamed of becoming a doctor, I never dreamed that I would end up living in a country town, finding my future husband and being so happy with my life as a paediatrician here in Wagga.

UPDATE FROM MURRUMBIDGEE MEDICAL TRAINING HUB (MMTH)



Renate Millonig and Deb Smith—admin power for MMTH

The MMTH welcomes Renate Millonig as their new Project Officer based in Wagga Wagga. Renate has extensive experience managing projects within urban, rural and remote Primary Health contexts, and has a particular interest in Indigenous health. Prior to her work within the Hub, Renate coordinated a research project at Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Alice Springs. Renate’s studies in Public Health have been geared toward qualitative health research with an ‘art and health’ focus.

Recently Max Graffen Hub Director Wagga Wagga Campus and Debbie Smith also based at UNSW Wagga Wagga met with Year 3,5 & 6 students to share their career pathway knowledge and progress over coffee and home-baked treats. Accessible, timely career pathway information emerged as a common need. The concept of developing

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MURRUMBIDGEE MEDICAL TRAINING HUB (CONT)

relationships with senior students as mentors also featured.

The MMTH developed a student survey to distribute more widely to medical students on the Griffith campus and the Riverina Rural Training Hub. The data collected will inform our efforts to support career pathways and hopefully build a register of willing mentors.

We welcome Christina Lane as a new Project Officer to the UNSW RCS Medical Training Hubs program. She will be based in Sydney providing full-time support and coordination across the UNSW Hub regions. Christina has a background in health policy and project management both in the UK and Australia, and is looking forward to getting out to each of the UNSW Rural Clinical School campuses.

The MMTH welcomes Clinical Educator, Michael Maw. Michael, previously worked as an Emergency Nurse Practitioner gaining considerable experience with the 'Skills and Simulation Centre' located at the John Hunter Hospital, Newcastle. He will bring an added dimension to the planned Education



Medicine/Rural Clinical School
Murrumbidgee Medical Training Hub

CRICOS Provider Code 00080

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RCS Griffith Campus 30 Noorebar Ave, GRIFFITH NSW, 2680 T(02) 6964 4823 - <https://rcs.med.unsw.edu.au/rcs-griffith-campus>

MURRUMBIDGEE MEDICAL AND RIVERINA RURAL TRAINING HUBS SECOND JOINT COLLABORATIVE FORUM

We welcomed new members to the Forum, final year medical student Joe Murphy and a GCTC JMO representative Dr Ellen Hinch from WWRRH. This second Collaborative Forum was hosted by MMTH at the UNSW Rural Clinical School Wagga Wagga on 8 November.



Among the concerns raised by these two representatives of our key stakeholders, were support for Bonded scholars and the difficulty of obtaining timely information for career decisions.

An additional concern is the current difficulty of linking trainees with demonstrated rural intent and local connections, to their preferred community under existing State and National selection scenarios.

If you missed our first Joint Hubs Newsletter please email

RRTHenquiries@nd.edu.au or Murrumbidgee-mth@unsw.edu.au and we will send you a copy.