



All roads lead to the Riverina

Tipping their hats: Two soon-to-be graduates of the Riverina Regional Training Hub Abbie Wilesmith and Catherine Hitches

In April this year, Abbie Wilesmith and Catherine Hitches, two final year medical students from The University of Newcastle, travelled from Tamworth (where they are completing their studies) to Temora.

They drove the seven and a half hour trip to participate in the Riverina Regional Training Hub annual Rural Generalist (RG) Workshop and Showcase.

Now these two soon-to-be graduates have their feet firmly set on training in our region.

They broke their journey at Yeoval to grab this classic photo of themselves and the Big Akubra.

Their participation was part of their preparation to apply for internships at Wagga Wagga Base Hospital in 2023.

Both women have connections in the area but have seized every opportunity to learn more about rural training and careers in the region. Both Abbie and Catherine hold Rural Doctors Network (RDN) Cadetships and appreciate the support and opportunities the RDN have

provided during the second half of their medical school years.

Back in 2019 Abbie attended the RDN Rural Health Forum in Sydney with her university rural health club. While running a student workshop that day, she had her first contact with the Riverina Regional Training Hub.

In 2021 at an RDN Cadetship weekend in Albury, Catherine heard Dr. Rachel James and other Rural Generalists talk about their experience, which encouraged an interest in the Riverina Regional Training Hub. Both Abbie and Catherine have connected with the Riverina Regional Training Hub since then, including the 2022 Orange Cadetship weekend and most recently, in Temora at the RG Workshop and Showcase.

Abbie and Catherine were keen to attend the RG Workshop and Showcase to learn more about training in the region. In wonderful synchronicity Dr Rachel James was part of the teaching faculty for the workshop as were other passionate rural generalists including Drs Marion Reeve, Ben James, Maggie Minogue, Vennassa

Wong, Jennifer Smith, Barbara Cameron and Alam Yoosuff. They also met doctors in training from Wagga Wagga Base Hospital and local medical students from the Notre Dame and UNSW Rural clinical schools. All these locals shared their stories of living and working in the area with great honesty and passion, reinforcing Abbie and Catherine's intention to apply to train as junior doctors rurally, preferably in Wagga Wagga.

Excitingly their applications to continue their rural training in Wagga Wagga has been successful!

Both Abbie and Catherine are keen to get involved in community groups and events in Wagga Wagga as they have while in Tamworth.

This year, they have developed a love for pottery at the Tamworth Regional Craft Centre, enjoying the company of and generous encouragement from local ceramicists.

They hope to continue this hobby once they move south. Catherine in particular is looking forward to enjoying the music

scene in Wagga Wagga, as she loves song writing, playing guitar and piano. Abbie enjoys bushwalking and can't wait to get out amongst the trails in Riverina Murrumbidgee!

While both Abbie and Catherine have a keen eye on Rural Generalist training in the Riverina, each are also interested in varying specialties. In the next few years, Catherine hopes to expand her experience in Psychiatry, Emergency Medicine and Paediatrics, while Abbie is keen to get more involved in Anaesthetics and Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

How lucky are we to be welcoming these two in 2023. Their decision has been supported by many people and organisations passionate about improving rural health outcomes. ■



Abbie Wilesmith and Catherine Hitches will arrive in 2023 as graduates from the Riverina Regional Training Hub

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

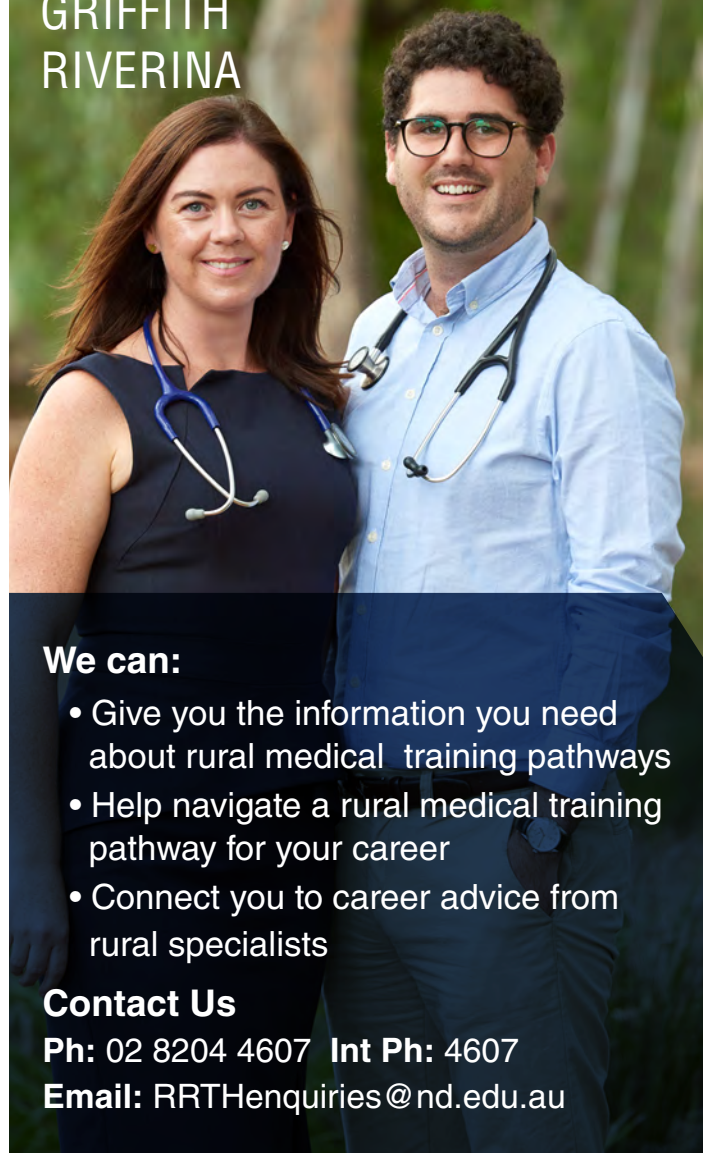
Fran Trench

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