

HANDS ON EVERYWHERE FOR VISITING MEDICAL STUDENTS



Medical students Harry Hamblin and Brenden James spent two weeks on the Bush Bursary placement.

Forty medical, nursing and allied health students were sponsored by the CWA and local councils recently to spend two weeks in rural and regional NSW as part of the NSW Rural Doctors Network Bush Bursary program. Locally, 10 spent time in Griffith, Hay, Leeton Lockhart, Narrandera and Wagga Wagga.

Just before Christmas medical students Harry Hamblin and Brenden James spent two weeks on a Bush Bursary placement that combined time in Lockhart and Wagga Wagga. Both are current University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA) medical students based in Sydney. Harry is a local whose family is from Young, and while Brenden is a city lad, he has rural family connections down Woomargama way.

Warmly welcomed by the Lockhart community their experience started with a tour of Lockhart and time on farm with well-known locals Fran and

Max Day, whose family were in the midst of harvest. The following days at the Lockhart Multipurpose Service and Lockhart Medical Clinic provided them with wonderful hands-on experiences. Both students were so excited by how much they learned as local health teams involved them closely in each day's activities, not all of which were routine! Outside of working hours found them playing trivia, attending the Lockhart Hospital Christmas party and at the mercy of the Osborne Cricket Club.

The second week of the placement continued in Wagga Wagga with local general practitioners and their teams at Hammond Health and the Aboriginal Medical Service (RIVMED). At Wagga Wagga Base Hospital involvement was again hands-on, with experienced clinicians encouraging engagement and questions. Harry and Brenden spent time in the ED department, in the Geriatrics and Mental Health

Units. One highlight for Harry was the day he spent with Prof Kerin Fielding, Orthopaedic Surgeon. As he summarised, "spending a day in the theatre not only gave me the opportunity to see surgeries but to also learn how to scrub in and how the whole surgical team worked together throughout the whole process. I believe this experience will be very valuable for me when I start my clinical years. Throughout the surgeries, Prof. Fielding was very active in asking me clinical anatomy-based questions and answering any questions I had about the surgeries and medicine in general. "

Brenden's experience in Wagga Wagga Emergency department was "awesome, as the registrars were so welcoming and keen to throw us into the mix where safe. Even though they were incredibly busy, they took the time to explain things and educate us. There was the diversity of experience, presentations were so broad and varied that I learnt a great deal more than I expected I would. The team in the ED were all so keen to get me to do stuff and teach me, that I ended up staying 11 hours!"

The value of experience in two such different locations, even though only forty-five minutes apart, was clearly appreciated by both young men who were amazed at how much they learnt, both about rural medicine and regional living. They had the chance to talk with local practitioners about possible rural training pathways and get involved in community activities.

The Riverina Regional Training Hub collaborated with the NSW Rural Doctors Network (RDN) to arrange time for both Hamblin and Brenden with Wagga Wagga clinicians and health workers and Lockhart Shire

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The whole rural and regional experience for Bush Bursars.

Council undertook this in Lockhart. A very wonderful undertaking for everyone involved, made possible by the generosity of local communities and health teams. ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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