

Media Release

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Regional Hubs to Train Doctors in the Regions for the Regions

The Regional Health Training Hubs announcement today by the Australian Government has been welcomed by Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand. The 26 training hubs will assist medical graduates to move through the pipeline, training specialist doctors and GP's in the regions, for the regions.

Professor Richard Murray, acting President of Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand, said the investment in the new training hubs will mean regions are more fully involved in training the specialist doctors that regional and remote communities need.

Medical Deans have long advocated for a flipped model of joined up, regionally based specialist training with a city rotation to provide greater opportunities for young doctors to undertake their specialist training in regional and rural locations and remain in these areas.

"The number of graduating doctors in Australia has almost tripled over the past 15 years, yet what we have seen is graduates piling up in the cities, looking for the city-based specialist training jobs.

This announcement builds on the success of the rural clinical schools program and will allow many more medical graduates to train as specialist doctors and GPs where they are most needed – in regional and remote Australia" Professor Murray said.

Students who undertake a rural placement express high levels of satisfaction and the most recent data from a survey of final year medical students indicate 36.5% have a preference for practicing outside a capital city.

Professor Murray said "Rural clinical schools and regional medical schools have been delivering graduates who would like to live and work in regional and remote Australia. What has been missing is the opportunity for them to train as specialists and GPs in the areas that most need them."

"Australia has a record number of doctors for its population, but regional Australia is forced to rely on importing doctors from overseas. It is time that the Commonwealth, state and territory governments committed to a revolution in the further training of medical graduates, one that sees much more specialist training based in regional Australia, with a city rotation as needed and the Regional Health Training Hubs are a welcome first step" he said.

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