



## **Supports available to current and future GPs in rural and remote Australia**

An Information Paper for: high school students; university students; registrars and interns; urban GPs interested in rural practice; rural GPs; and OTDs.

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March 2007  
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## Preamble

The following table seeks to describe the types of programs and services available to either encourage the recruitment or support the retention of general practitioners in rural and remote areas of Australia. It seeks to provide an overview of what is currently available to doctors working in rural or remote areas (or those who could potentially work in rural and remote areas) in order to identify the stages in a doctors career where programs overlap or need to be developed for future policy development. A document of this type is important to the sector because it can serve as a guide for future program development as well as highlight possibilities for the streamlining of programs where there is considerable duplication.

The table is divided into two main categories, to accommodate the different types of programs available to doctors trained in Australia and doctors trained overseas. In the case of doctors trained in Australia, the programs are divided according to the doctor's stage in their career cycle, beginning at high school which is the earliest stage that interventions can influence an individual's career choice. For Overseas Trained Doctors (OTDs) the types of programs and services available are divided according to whether the OTD is residing overseas or in Australia (either temporarily or permanently).

## Publication Status

This is an ongoing publication and has been created with the consultation of many rural health sector stakeholders. This document will be regularly updated when information is received from stakeholders.

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Date document last updated: 15th March 2007

## Attractors and Supports for Rural and remote Doctors available in Australia

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
1. Australian Medical Graduate	1.1 High School students and undergraduate students	1.1.1 General Rural Health Career Information	1.1.1.1 <i>No Shame Job</i> <sup>1</sup> is a booklet for young Indigenous people thinking about a career in health. It has information about occupations in health; scholarships; career information and guidance.	1.1.1.1.1 Available for download from <a href="http://www.dest.gov.au">www.dest.gov.au</a>
			1.1.1.2 ' <i>Opportunities as vast as the landscape working in rural and remote health</i> ' <sup>2</sup> details experiences of health workers in rural and remote Australia.	1.1.1.2.1 Available for download from <a href="http://www.arhen.org.au">www.arhen.org.au</a>
			1.1.1.3 The Health Careers in the Bush website provides information about health professional courses and scholarships available in Queensland. It is aimed at students from rural and remote Queensland to help them make an informed decision about their future health career.	1.1.1.3.1 Available at <a href="http://www.healthcareersinthebush.com">www.healthcareersinthebush.com</a>
		1.1.2 High School aimed Rural Health Career Promotion	1.1.2.1 <i>Rural High School Visits</i> <sup>3</sup> are conducted to encourage rural secondary school students into careers in health. Undertaken by a number of organisations including universities and the National Rural Health Network and its member Rural Health Clubs.	1.1.2.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Contact the National Rural Health Network at <a href="http://www.nrhn.org.au">www.nrhn.org.au</a>
			1.1.2.2 <i>Health Careers Camps</i> for year 10 students <sup>4</sup> are held by the University Department of Rural Health in Tasmania. Involves hands-on and interactive experiences over 3 days.	1.1.2.2.1 Tas only. Teachers and pathway planning officers select appropriate students for the Health Careers Camps.
			1.1.2.3 The <i>Rural High Schools Medicine Career Week</i> <sup>5</sup> is held for Year 11 and 12 students from rural and remote high schools in NSW with the aim of motivating rural students to gain entry into a medicine program. Students visit the Medicine faculties of the Universities of New South Wales, Newcastle and Sydney.	1.1.2.3.1 NSW only. Students are selected on the basis of their interest and motivation to study medicine and their academic record.
		1.1.3 University Entry Schemes	1.1.3.1 <i>Bonded Medical Places Scheme</i> <sup>6</sup> provides additional HECS funded medical places at university. Students who accept a bonded medical place at university are then obliged to work in a District of Workforce Shortage area for a period of six years after the completion of their studies (or within 16	1.1.3.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Universities manage the application and selection process for the BMP Scheme.

<sup>1</sup> All information on the 'No shame job' guide was collected from [www.dest.gov.au](http://www.dest.gov.au)

<sup>2</sup> All information was taken directly from the publication

<sup>3</sup> All information was sourced directly from the NRHN

<sup>4</sup> All information on health careers camps for health students was collected from [www.ruralhealth.utas.edu.au](http://www.ruralhealth.utas.edu.au)

<sup>5</sup> All the information on the Rural High Schools Medicine Career Week was collected from <http://notes.med.unsw.edu.au>

<sup>6</sup> Commonwealth of Australia. (2005). *Health workforce – Bonded medical places scheme*. Department of Health and Ageing. Available at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
			years of commencing their medical degree).	
			1.1.3.2 Most Universities offer an <i>Indigenous Entry into Medicine</i> Scheme to increase the number of Indigenous people studying medicine.	1.1.3.2.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students are only eligible to apply. Contact your local University.
			1.1.3.3 Most Universities offer a <i>Rural Student Entry Scheme</i> into Medicine.	1.1.3.3.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Applicants must generally have high academic achievements and have resided for a specified length of time in a defined Australian rural area. Contact your local University.
		1.1.4 University Student Targeted Rural Health Career Promotion	1.1.4.1. The <i>Rural GP Taster Weekend</i> <sup>7</sup> is held once a year in a rural community and highlights the positive aspects of rural practice to university students in Tasmania.	1.1.4.1.1 Tas only. This event is open to 20 final year medical students who express an interest in rural general practice in Tasmania. Contact GP workforce Tasmania <a href="http://www.gpworkforce.com.au">www.gpworkforce.com.au</a>
			1.1.4.2 There are nineteen <i>Rural Health Clubs</i> <sup>8</sup> (RHCs) throughout universities in Australia which have more than 5,000 members. The clubs are heavily involved in the promotion of rural electives, placements and scholarships to all students, often providing urban students with their first taste of country life.	1.1.4.2.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Membership is open to all students studying medicine, allied health or nursing degrees at the university of the RHC. Contact the National Rural Health Network on <a href="http://www.nrhn.org.au">www.nrhn.org.au</a> for more information.
			1.1.4.3 The <i>Working HUGS scheme</i> offers medical students the opportunity to experience rural medical life. Students stay with a rural medical practitioner and their family during university holidays, experiencing the local community and enjoying the local sights.	1.1.4.3.1 NSW only. Applicants must be current medical students from a NSW university.
		1.1.5 Student Mental Health and Well Being support	1.1.5.1 The <i>Doctors Health Advisory Service</i> <sup>9</sup> aims to ensure that student doctors have access to health advice. Each DHAS operates a 24 hour a day telephone Help Line to provide advice over the phone, and, if necessary, recommended to consult a GP, a specialist, or other professional.	1.1.5.1.1 All undergraduates studying medicine are able to use this service. For information see <a href="http://www.doctorshealth.org.au">www.doctorshealth.org.au</a>
		1.1.6 Scholarships	1.1.6.1 <i>Rural Australia Medical Undergraduate Scheme (RAMUS)</i> <sup>10</sup> scholarships are currently valued at \$10,000 for each year throughout the student's medical degree. RAMUS	1.1.6.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Students from rural and remote Australia are eligible to apply for the RAMUS scheme.

<sup>7</sup> All information on the Rural GP Taster Weekend was sourced directly from GP workforce Tasmania [www.gpworkforce.com.au](http://www.gpworkforce.com.au)

<sup>8</sup> All information about Rural Health Clubs was sourced directly from the National Rural Health Network [www.nrhn.org.au](http://www.nrhn.org.au)

<sup>9</sup> All information on the Doctors Health Advisory Service was sourced from [www.doctorshealth.org.au](http://www.doctorshealth.org.au)

<sup>10</sup> All information regarding RAMUS was collected from either [www.ruralhealth.org.au](http://www.ruralhealth.org.au), or Commonwealth of Australia. (2004). *Medical Rural Bonded Scholarship Scheme Information Pack*. P 13. Available at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
			scholarships are not bonded; but rural ties are reinforced through a mentoring scheme and membership of a student Rural Health Club.	
			1.1.6.2 The <i>John Flynn Scholarship Scheme (JFSS)</i> <sup>11</sup> enables medical students to undertake rural placements. Scholarship holders commit to a two-week placement in the same rural or remote community for every year of their medical course. The scholarship covers the costs associated with travel and accommodation and scholarship holders receive a further \$1,000 to cover the cost of food and living expenses accrued during the placement.	1.1.6.2.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia and are open to Australian citizens or permanent residents who are enrolled in a medical degree and are not recipients of a bonded scholarship.
			1.1.6.3 <i>The Medical Rural Bonded Scholarship Scheme (MRBSS)</i> <sup>12</sup> provides 100 medical places every year. The scholarship is \$20,000 per year during the course of the degree. Scholarship holders are required to work for a period of six continuous years in a RRMA 4-7 once they have completed post graduate training as a general practitioner, or a RRMA 3-7 once they have completed post graduate training as a specialist.	1.1.6.3.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Applications are open to all Australian citizens or permanent resident first year medical students.
			1.1.6.4 <i>John Niland Scholarships</i> <sup>13</sup> are available to assist rural origin students to undertake a course (including medicine) at the University of New South Wales.	1.1.6.4.1 Available to a student enrolled at an Australian country high school that completes the HSC in the top 5% of their state cohort.
			1.1.6.5 <i>Ngunnagan Club Scholarships</i> <sup>14</sup> are available up to the value of \$2,000 for rural origin students who wish to enrol at the University of NSW for health disciplines (including medicine).	1.1.6.5.1 Available to a student enrolled at an Australian country high school that completes the HSC in the top 5% of their state cohort.
			1.1.6.6 <i>NSW Rural Resident Medical Officer Cadetships</i> <sup>15</sup> are scholarships offered to medical students. The scholarship provides up to \$15,000 per year for the final two years of their medical degree. Cadets are required to work for two years in a rural NSW Base Hospital within the first triennium following graduation. Each Cadet is eligible for a relocation allowance to help defray costs associated with their move to the country.	1.1.6.6.1 Only medical students who are NSW/ACT residents (country or city) can apply. This includes NSW/ACT residents studying medicine in another Australian state/territory. Applicants must be an Australian or New Zealand citizen or a permanent resident of Australia. Cadetship recipients cannot hold a RAMUS or an MRBSS at the same time. Bonded place students without scholarships are able to apply.

<sup>11</sup> All information on JFSS was collected from [www.acrrm.org.au](http://www.acrrm.org.au)

<sup>12</sup> All information on MRBSS was collected from Commonwealth of Australia. (2004). *Medical Rural Bonded Scholarship Scheme Information Pack*. P 2-3. Available at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

<sup>13</sup> All information on John Niland Scholarships was collected from [www.nswrdn.com.au](http://www.nswrdn.com.au)

<sup>14</sup> All information on Ngunnagan Club Scholarship was collected from [www.nswrdn.com.au](http://www.nswrdn.com.au)

<sup>15</sup> All information on Warren Shire Council NSW Scholarship Scheme was collected from [www.nswrdn.com.au](http://www.nswrdn.com.au)

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
			1.1.6.7 The <i>Cotton Industry Medical Scholarship</i> <sup>16</sup> provides a medical student with financial assistance of \$5,000 for three years. The student is required to spend a minimum of two weeks of their holidays each year on a rural placement in a NSW cotton growing region.	1.1.6.7.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Applicants must be an Australian or New Zealand citizen or a permanent resident of Australia, and be studying medicine at an Australian medical school.
			1.1.6.8 <i>Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarship Scheme</i> <sup>17</sup> provides scholarships worth up to \$15,000 per annum to a maximum \$60,000 for people studying health disciplines.	1.1.6.8.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Applicants must be either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. Applicants must enrol in a number of disciplines which include Medicine at a recognised educational institution.
			1.1.6.9 <i>Australian Medical Students Association &amp; National Rural Health Network Rural Elective Bursary</i> <sup>18</sup> provides \$1,000 towards a rural placement for medical, allied health and nursing students at universities across Australia.	1.1.6.9.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Available for students who are members of their university Rural Health Club undertaking ≥ 4 week elective placement with a rural health care provider, or in an Aboriginal medical service, within Australia.
			1.1.6.10 <i>Queensland Health Rural Scholarships</i> <sup>19</sup> provide students financial assistance at the following rates for Medicine: Living allowance \$14,200; Tertiary Grant \$5,800; Travel allowance \$500; Training/ Professional Conferences \$500. After graduation, scholarship holders are contracted to be employed by QLD Health in rural health care facilities.	1.1.6.10.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia to permanent residents of Australia. Applicants must exhibit a genuine commitment to the provision of health care for rural and remote Queensland.
			1.1.6.11 <i>Dept of Education &amp; Training/University of New South Wales Rural Assistance Scheme</i> <sup>20</sup> scholarships are available to help students from rural NSW in the transition to university study at UNSW up to the value of \$2,000.	1.1.6.11.1 Applicants must have been accepted into the first year of an undergraduate degree program (including medicine), and have attended a State Government High School in rural NSW.
			1.1.6.12 <i>North Dakota Rural Bursary</i> <sup>21</sup> Travel Grant to undertake a rural elective in North Dakota. The value of this bursary is a return economy airfare from North Queensland to North Dakota and support for living expenses.	1.1.6.12.1 QLD only. Open to students enrolled in year 2 of medicine at James Cook University who demonstrate an interest in rural medicine.
			1.1.6.13 <i>Auscott Limited Education Scholarships (Medicine)</i> <sup>22</sup> are awarded to three final year secondary school students each year wishing to undertake medicine. The scholarship is up to \$10,000 annually to a maximum of \$40,000.	1.1.6.13.1 Only NSW, ACT, QLD. This scholarship is available to students from the following areas: Naomi Valley, Macquarie Valley, and Gwydir Valley. Applications will also be assessed on academic merit.

<sup>16</sup> All information about the Cotton Industry Medical Scholarship was collected from [www.nswrdn.com.au](http://www.nswrdn.com.au)

<sup>17</sup> All information about the Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarship Scheme was collected from [www.rcna.org.au](http://www.rcna.org.au)

<sup>18</sup> All information about AMSA & NRHN Rural Elective Bursary was sourced directly from the National Rural Health Network

<sup>19</sup> All information on Queensland Health Rural Scholarships was collected from [www.health.qld.gov.au](http://www.health.qld.gov.au)

<sup>20</sup> All information on Dept of Education & Training/UNSW Rural Assistance Scheme was collected from [www.nswrdn.com.au](http://www.nswrdn.com.au)

<sup>21</sup> All information on the North Dakota Rural Bursaries was collected from [www.myfuture.edu.au](http://www.myfuture.edu.au)

<sup>22</sup> All information on Auscott Limited Education Scholarships was collected from [www.healthcareersinthebush.com](http://www.healthcareersinthebush.com)

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
			1.1.6.14 <i>Warren Tertiary Scholarship Scheme</i> <sup>23</sup> provides \$1,000 to students from Warren Shire who are undertaking tertiary education (which includes medicine) and are experiencing financial difficulty.	1.1.6.14.1 NSW only. Applicants must reside in Warren Shire NSW and be enrolled in a tertiary course.
			1.1.6.15 <i>Victor &amp; Adele Bear Undergraduate Scholarship</i> <sup>24</sup> scholarships are \$1000.	1.1.6.15.1 NSW only. Applicants must be enrolled at the University of Newcastle in Medicine and must be of either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.
			1.1.6.16 <i>Jack Doherty Undergraduate Scholarships</i> <sup>25</sup> are from \$2,000 to \$2,500.	1.1.6.16.1 NSW only. Applicants must be in their second year or more at the University of Newcastle and must be either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.
			1.1.6.17 <i>Ginninderra Scholarship for Nursing and Medicine</i> <sup>26</sup> provides a living allowance up to \$27,700 for medical students.	1.1.6.17.1 Only available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Only available to nursing students enrolled in undergraduate nursing studies at the University of Canberra or Medical students enrolled at the University of Sydney's Canberra Clinical School. Contact the University of Canberra for further information.
			1.1.6.18 <i>South Australian Rural Education Scholarship Scheme</i> <sup>27</sup> is offered to full-time students in a number of health disciplines (including medicine). Scholarship recipients are required to live and work in a rural area of South Australia upon completion of their undergraduate degree (and any necessary postgraduate training) for a period equivalent to the receipt of the scholarship funding. This scholarship provides students with \$5000 per annum for up to 3 years study.	1.1.6.18.1 SA only. Students who have resided in rural South Australia prior to undertaking their tertiary education are eligible for this scholarship.
			1.1.6.19 <i>Bush Bursaries and the County Women's Association Scholarships</i> <sup>28</sup> provide medical students in NSW with \$3,000 each to assist with costs associated with their studies. In return, the students are required to spend two weeks on a rural placement in country NSW during their university	1.1.6.19.1 NSW/ACT only. Both country and city students are eligible to apply for the Bush Bursaries and Country Women's Associations scholarships. Applicants must be undertaking 3rd year medicine at the universities of NSW or Newcastle, or enrolled in 2nd

<sup>23</sup> All information on Bush Bursaries and the County Women's Association Scholarships was collected from [www.nswrdn.com.au](http://www.nswrdn.com.au)

<sup>24</sup> All information on Victor and Adele Bear Undergraduate Scholarship was collected from [www.nswrdn.com.au](http://www.nswrdn.com.au)

<sup>25</sup> All information of Jack Doherty Undergraduate Scholarships was collected from [www.nswrdn.com.au](http://www.nswrdn.com.au)

<sup>26</sup> All the information on the Ginninderra Scholarship for Nursing and Medicine was sourced from [www.canberra.edu.au](http://www.canberra.edu.au)

<sup>27</sup> All information on the SA Rural Education Scholarship Scheme was collected from [www.myfuture.edu.au](http://www.myfuture.edu.au)

<sup>28</sup> All information on Bush Bursaries and the County Women's Association Scholarships was collected from [www.nswrdn.com.au](http://www.nswrdn.com.au)

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
			holidays.	year medicine at the University of Sydney or the Australian National University.
			1.1.6.20 <i>Medical Undergraduate Student Bursary National Rural Faculty</i> <sup>29</sup> funds student attendance to the RACGPs Annual Scientific Convention (flights, accommodation and registration).	1.1.6.20.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Available to students who are members of a Rural Health Student Club at an Australian University. Applicants must submit a 1,000 word essay. Enquires to: <a href="mailto:rural@racgp.org.au">rural@racgp.org.au</a>
	1.2 Post Graduate Training (PGY 1,2,3)	1.2.1 Rural Training	1.2.1.1 There are 14 <i>Rural Clinical Schools</i> <sup>30</sup> , managed by 12 universities, to enable students to undertake long term medical training in rural environments. At least 25 per cent of Australian Government supported medical students will undertake a minimum of one year of their clinical training in rural areas by the time they graduate.	1.2.1.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Students must be enrolled in medicine at an undergraduate level. Contact one of the 14 rural clinical schools for further information.
			1.2.1.2 The <i>University Departments of Rural Health Program</i> <sup>31</sup> provides opportunities for students to undertake rural placements as part of their university training.	1.2.1.2.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Contact one of the University Departments of Rural Health <a href="http://www.arhen.org.au">www.arhen.org.au</a> .
			1.2.1.3 <i>Rural Locum Relief Program</i> <sup>32</sup> exposes pre-vocational doctors (generally when they have finished Post Graduate Year 3) to rural and remote practice by enabling them to have temporary access to the Medicare Benefits Scheme and attract rebates when working in RRMA 4-7 (in some cases RRMA 3).	1.2.1.3.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. The RLRP is administered by the Rural Workforce Agencies (RWA's). See <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a> for contact details.
			1.2.1.4 The <i>Rural Other Medical Practitioners (ROMPS) Program</i> <sup>33</sup> provides non-vocationally recognised medical practitioners access to full Medicare rebates for services provided in Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Area (RRMA) 4-7 locations. Doctors participating in the ROMPS program need to express interest in undertaking an alternative pathway to vocational registration (this generally refers to the pathways to Fellowship with the RACGP other than through the Australian General Practice Training Program).	1.2.1.4.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Contact the Rural OMPs Hotline on 1800 667 677 for further information.
1.2.1.5 <i>Prevocational General Practice Placement Program</i> <sup>34</sup> funds 10-12 week placements for medical graduates in the	1.2.1.5.1 Available in all states and territories of Australia in selected areas through training			

<sup>29</sup> All information on the *Medical Undergraduate Student Bursary National Rural Faculty* was obtained directly from the RACGP

<sup>30</sup> All information on Rural Clinical schools was sought from [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

<sup>31</sup> All information on University Departments of Rural Health was sourced from [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

<sup>32</sup> All information regarding the Rural Locum Relief Program was collected from of Australia. (2003). Biennial Review of the Medicare Provider Legislation. Department of Health and Ageing: Canberra.

<sup>33</sup> All information on ROMPS was sourced from [www.gpatlas.org.au/](http://www.gpatlas.org.au/)

<sup>34</sup> All information on the *Prevocational General Practice Placement Program* was obtained directly from the RACGP

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			post intern hospital years in rural general practices. Funds backfill the JMO position during placement as well as the general practice placement itself.	collaborations involving participating general practices, a supply hospital and a fund holder. Managed by the RACGP and ACRRM. For more information contact the Education Department at the RACGP on (03) 8699 0411 or email <a href="mailto:education@racgp.org.au">education@racgp.org.au</a> or ACRRM on (03) 6266 6091 or email <a href="mailto:t.johnston-smith@acrmm.org.au">t.johnston-smith@acrmm.org.au</a>
		1.2.2 Education	1.2.2.1 <i>Rural and Remote Medical Education Online (RRMEO)</i> <sup>35</sup> enables users to access medical education online.	1.2.2.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Contact Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM).
			1.2.2.2 <i>GP learning</i> <sup>36</sup> enables users to access interactive and moderated medical education online, from Case of the Month to full courses.	1.2.2.2.1 Available anywhere in Australia. Contact the RACGP at <a href="http://www.gplearning.com.au">www.gplearning.com.au</a> or email <a href="mailto:contactus@gplearning.com.au">contactus@gplearning.com.au</a> or call toll free 1800 284 789.
		1.2.3 Scholarships	1.2.3.1 The <i>University of Tasmania</i> offers scholarships <sup>37</sup> for postgraduate rural health research for a period of 3.5 years. The scholarship provides a stipend of \$24,338 per year plus allowances.	1.2.3.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Successful applicants must have achieved at least an upper second class Honours degree or equivalent.
		1.2.4 Doctor health and well being	1.2.4.1 The <i>Doctors Health Advisory Service</i> <sup>38</sup> aims to ensure that student doctors have access to health advice. Each DHAS operates a 24 hour a day telephone Help Line to provide advice over the phone, and, if necessary, recommended to consult a GP, a specialist, or other professional.	1.2.4.1.1 All postgraduate students in medicine are able to use this service. For information see <a href="http://www.doctorshealth.org.au">www.doctorshealth.org.au</a>
			1.2.4.2 <i>'When the Cowpat Hits the Windmill: a mental health guide for students at university and on placement that promotes wellbeing and self care'</i> <sup>39</sup> provides information to assist students dealing with rural experiences of isolation.	1.2.4.2.1 Download from <a href="http://www.nrhn.org.au">www.nrhn.org.au</a> .

<sup>35</sup> All information on Rural and Remote Education Online was sourced from [www.rrmeo.com](http://www.rrmeo.com)

<sup>36</sup> All information on *GP learning* was obtained directly from the RACGP

<sup>37</sup> All information on Scholarships in Rural Health Research was collected from [www.myfuture.edu.au](http://www.myfuture.edu.au)

<sup>38</sup> All information on the Doctors Health Advisory Service was sourced from [www.doctorshealth.org.au](http://www.doctorshealth.org.au)

<sup>39</sup> All information on the mental health guide was sourced directly from the NRHN

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
	1.3 General Practice Training	1.3.1 Rural Training <sup>40</sup>	1.3.1.1 <i>Australian General Practice Training</i> (AGPT) provides the postgraduate vocational training program for medical graduates wishing to pursue a career in general practice in Australia. All Regional Training Providers deliver training towards the Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and many rural RTPs also deliver enhanced rural training for the Fellowship of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine and RACGP dual rural award, the Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice (FARGP) and Graduate Diploma in Rural General Practice. Accommodation subsidies are also available.	1.3.1.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. General Practice registrars are eligible for the services provided by RTPs. Locate a Regional Training Providers via <a href="http://www.agpt.com.au">www.agpt.com.au</a> For details regarding the Fellowship of the Royal Australia College of General Practitioners, Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice and RACGP Graduate Diploma in Rural General Practice, go to <a href="http://www.racgp.org.au">www.racgp.org.au</a> For further information on the FACRRM visit the ACRRM website available at <a href="http://www.acrrm.org.au">www.acrrm.org.au</a>
		1.3.2 Financial incentives	1.3.2.1 The <i>General Practice Registrars Rural Incentive Payments Scheme</i> is available to registrars enrolled in the Rural Training Pathway. Up to \$60,000 is available over three years to registrars who undertake the majority of their training in RRMA areas 4-7. This does not include the hospital year.	1.3.2.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Registrars who wish to apply for the scheme can do so at any time. More information contact Medicare Australia RRIPS Helpline on 1800 010 550.
			1.3.2.2 The <i>RACGP National Rural Faculty Rural Registrar of the Year</i> <sup>41</sup> funds the cost of travel, accommodation and conference registration costs to the RACGPs Annual Scientific Convention.	1.3.2.2.1 Available in all states and territories of Australia to registrars enrolled in the RACGP Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice and RACGP Graduate Diploma in Rural General Practice. Entry is by nomination.
		1.3.3 Accommodation Support	1.3.3.1 Rural Training Providers offer various accommodation subsidies including relocation expenses, free accommodation or a mortgage/rent subsidy.	1.3.3.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Registrars will need to contact applicable RTP on <a href="http://www.agpt.com.au">www.agpt.com.au</a>
		1.3.4 Education Support	1.3.4.1 <i>Rural and Remote Medical Education Online</i> <sup>42</sup> , it enables users to access online learning programs.	1.3.4.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. See <a href="http://www.acrrm.org.au">www.acrrm.org.au</a>
			1.3.4.2 <i>GP learning</i> <sup>43</sup> enables users to access interactive and moderated medical education online, from Case of the Month to full courses.	1.3.4.2.1 Available anywhere in Australia. Contact the RACGP at <a href="http://www.gplearning.com.au">www.gplearning.com.au</a> or email <a href="mailto:contactus@gplearning.com.au">contactus@gplearning.com.au</a> or call toll free 1800 284 789.
1.3.5 Doctor Health and Well Being	1.3.5.1 The 24 hour, confidential <i>Bush Crisis Line</i> <sup>44</sup> provides support to rural health professionals and their families to successfully manage the stress associated with remote and rural practice.	1.3.5.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Available to all health professionals who work in rural and remote areas of Australia. Bush Crisis line is available by calling 1800 805 391.		

<sup>40</sup> All information on Rural Training Providers was accessed either from [www.agpt.com.au](http://www.agpt.com.au) or directly from the RACGP

<sup>41</sup> All information on the RACGP National Rural Faculty Rural Registrar of the Year was obtained directly from the RACGP

<sup>42</sup> All information on Rural and Remote Education Online was sourced from [www.rrmeo.com](http://www.rrmeo.com)

<sup>43</sup> All information on *GP learning* was obtained directly from the RACGP

<sup>44</sup> All information regarding the 24 Hour Bush Crisis Line was accessed from [www.bcl.org.au/](http://www.bcl.org.au/)

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
			1.3.5.2 <i>The Doctors Health Advisory Service</i> <sup>45</sup> operates a 24 hour a day telephone Help Line to provide personal advice to practitioners in difficulties and also provide health promotion and educational information through their web sites	1.3.5.2.1 For information on the Doctors Health Advisory Service see <a href="http://www.doctorshealth.org.au">www.doctorshealth.org.au</a>
	1.4 Vocationally Registered GPs	1.4.1 Professional Support	1.4.1.1 Many organisations provide locums on request from doctors for both recreational and professional leave. Please be aware that you need to give as much notice as possible in order to increase your chances of obtaining a Locum.	1.4.1.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. A good place to start when enquiring about locum services would be the Rural Workforce Agencies by getting their details from <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a>
			1.4.1.2 Practice Support towards accreditation can be obtained from both <i>Rural Workforce Agencies</i> and <i>Divisions of General Practice</i> . This can also include practical practice support in areas of information and advice on practice management and viability to assist GPs and their practice teams provide safe and high quality care to their patients.	1.4.1.2.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. The contact details of each Rural Workforce Agency is available at <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a> and the contact details for each of the Divisions of General Practice is available from <a href="http://www.adgp.com.au">www.adgp.com.au</a>
		1.4.2 Education and Training Provision for General Practitioners	1.4.2.1 <i>The Rural Health Education Foundation</i> <sup>46</sup> provides satellite-based health education for rural doctors, pharmacists, nurses and allied health professionals. The broadcasts attract 1 point per hour as a Continuing Medical Education (CME) activity.	1.4.2.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. All health professionals can access the Rural Health Education Foundation's television programs by joining the network and installing the required equipment. See <a href="http://www.rhef.org.au">www.rhef.org.au</a>
			1.4.2.2 Rural Workforce Agencies, Divisions of General Practice, Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, Royal Australian College of General Practice etc provide <i>Continuing Medical Education</i> to support the ongoing professional development of GPs; types of CME may include chronic disease management, emergency skills, radiology services and obstetric ultrasound, etc.	1.4.2.2.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. The contact details of each Rural Workforce Agency is available at <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a> and the contact details for each of the Divisions of General Practice is available from <a href="http://www.adgp.com.au">www.adgp.com.au</a>
			1.4.2.3 Education Support Grants generally focus on the following primary areas: Obstetrics; Anaesthetics; GP General Surgery; and Emergency Medicine.	1.4.2.3.1 Most Rural Workforce Agencies offer Education Support Grants. For More information see contact one of the Rural Workforce Agencies listed at <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a>
		1.4.3 Training for Rural and Remote Procedural General Practitioners	1.4.3.1 The <i>Training for Rural and Remote Procedural General Practitioners Program</i> <sup>47</sup> supports General Practitioners in rural and remote areas by providing access to a grant to attend relevant training, up skilling and skills maintenance activities. The Program has two components: 1) a grant for the cost of up to two weeks training,	1.4.3.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. The Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine and the Royal Australian College of General Practice assess the eligibility of GPs and training activities and Medicare Australia makes grant payments to eligible procedural GPs. Contact the RACGP toll free

<sup>45</sup> All information on the Doctors Health Advisory Service was sourced from [www.doctorshealth.org.au](http://www.doctorshealth.org.au)

<sup>46</sup> All information on the Rural health Education Foundation was sourced from [www.rhef.com.au](http://www.rhef.com.au)

<sup>47</sup> All information on Training for Rural and Remote Procedural General Practitioners Program was sourced from [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
			<p>including the cost of locum relief to a maximum of \$15,000 per GP per financial year for procedural GPs practicing in surgery, anaesthetics or obstetrics in rural and remote areas (RRMA 3-7); and</p> <p>2) a grant for the cost of up to two days training, to a maximum of \$3,000 per GP per financial year for GPs practicing emergency medicine in rural and remote areas (RRMA 4-7) to attend approved up skilling activities.</p>	<p>on 1800 636 764 or email <a href="mailto:pauline.curtis@racgp.org.au">pauline.curtis@racgp.org.au</a> or ACCRRM via <a href="http://www.acrrm.org.au">www.acrrm.org.au</a></p>
			<p>1.4.3.2 <i>NSW Health General Practice Procedural Training Program</i><sup>48</sup> provides funding for new GP Procedural Training Posts in the specialty areas of Anaesthetics; Emergency Medicine; Surgery; Obstetrics; and Mental Health. The aim of these posts is to provide training in procedural disciplines and mental health that is needed for rural General Practice. The posts will link with existing accreditation processes for an Advanced Rural Skills Post (ARSP – 6-12 months full-time), through ACCRM &amp;/or the RACGP &amp; relevant Joint Consultative Committees.</p>	<p>1.4.3.2.1 NSW only. These posts may be linked with professional developed programs administered by ACCRM &amp;/or the RACGP. For eligibility requirements contact NSW Health</p>
		1.4.4 Accommodation Support	<p>1.4.4.1 Relocation grants are available in most states of Australia through the Rural Workforce Agencies. The grants can assist with covering the costs of removal of household contents and travel for the GP and their family (flights/fuel) if a doctor is relocating to a rural or remote area. Grants can be made up to \$20,000.</p>	<p>1.4.4.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. The contact details of each Rural Workforce Agency is available at <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a></p>
		1.4.5 Financial Incentives	<p>1.4.5.1 The Practice Incentives Program (PIP)<sup>49</sup> aims to recognise general practices that provide comprehensive, quality care, and which are either accredited or working towards accreditation against the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners' Standards for General Practices. The PIP is part of a blended payment approach for general practice. Payments made through the program are in addition to other income earned by the general practitioners and the practice, such as patient payments and Medicare rebates. A rural loading is paid to practices in rural and remote locations.</p> <p>1.4.5.2 A <i>Procedural GP Payment</i><sup>50</sup> of up to \$17,000 per year is made to procedural GPs providing obstetric services.</p>	<p>1.4.5.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. PIPs with rural loading are available to practices in rural and remote areas. Contact the Department of Health and Ageing for eligibility requirements.</p> <p>1.4.5.2.1 Available in all states and territories of Australian and only available to rural GPs who deliver</p>

<sup>48</sup> All information on the NSW Health General Practice Procedural Training Program was sourced from [www.ncgpt.org.au](http://www.ncgpt.org.au)

<sup>49</sup> All information on PIPs was sourced from [www.medicareaustralia.gov.au](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au)

<sup>50</sup> All information on the Procedural GP payment was sourced directly from the Rural Doctors Association Australia.

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
				20 or more babies a year. For further information contact the PIP Enquiry line on 1800 222 032.
			1.4.5.3 The Rural Retention Program <sup>51</sup> is an initiative that aims to recognise and retain long-serving general practitioners in rural and remote communities that may experience significant difficulties in retaining general practitioners. The major component of the Program is a Central Payments System administered by Medicare Australia, which commenced in December 1999. This part of the Program seeks to recognise general practitioners based on Medicare data on their services in rural and remote locations over a number of years.	1.4.5.3.1 Rural Workforce Agencies in each state and the Northern Territory have the role of monitoring and assessing Flexible Payments System applications under the Rural Retention Program
			1.4.5.4 The HECS Reimbursement Scheme <sup>52</sup> enables GPs who choose to practice in rural and remote Australia a reimbursement of one-fifth of their HECS debt accumulated from their degree to be reimbursed for each year of service provided in a RRMA 3-7.	1.4.5.4.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. HECS reimbursements are available for a ten year period following the completion of a medical degree.
		1.4.6 Family Support	1.4.6.1. The <i>Rural Medical Family Network (RMFN)</i> <sup>53</sup> provides a range of information and support services to assist rural medical families including training opportunities for rural medical spouses and spouse networking.	1.4.6.1.1 Rural Medical Family Networks exist in most state across Australia. Membership is for families of GPs practicing in rural and remote areas. Contact a Rural Workforce Agency through <a href="http://www.arrwaq.com.au">www.arrwaq.com.au</a>
		1.4.7 Doctor Mental Health and Well Being Services	1.4.7.1 <i>The Doctors Health Advisory Service</i> <sup>54</sup> is a 24 hour advice service available to OTDs. 1.4.7.2 The 24-hr confidential Bush Crisis Line <sup>55</sup> provides support that enhances the well being of multi-disciplinary health practitioners by supporting them and their families to successfully manage the stress associated with remote and rural practice.	1.4.7.1.1 For information on the Doctors Health Advisory Service see <a href="http://www.doctorshealth.org.au">www.doctorshealth.org.au</a> 1.4.7.2.1. Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Available to all health professionals who work in rural and remote areas of Australia. Bush Crisis line is available by calling 1800 805 391.
2. Overseas Trained Doctors	2.1 Residing Overseas	2.1.1 Doctor Connect <sup>56</sup>	2.1.1.1 Doctor connect is produced by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing to provide a starting point for overseas trained doctors (OTDs) who may be considering work in Australia. It provides details on medical registration and immigration requirements as well as links to	2.1.1.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Doctor connect is available to anyone who has access to the internet at <a href="http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au">www.doctorconnect.gov.au</a> .

<sup>51</sup> All information on the Rural Retention Program was sourced from [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

<sup>52</sup> All information regarding the HECS reimbursement scheme was collected from Commonwealth of Australia. 'Guidelines and application form'. *HECS reimbursement scheme*. Department of Health and Ageing. P 2. Available at. Commonwealth of Australia. 'Guidelines and application form'. *HECS reimbursement scheme*. Department of Health and Ageing. P 2. Available at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au).

<sup>53</sup> See RMFN websites for more information: [www.rmfn.org.au](http://www.rmfn.org.au); [www.rmfn-sa.com.au](http://www.rmfn-sa.com.au); [www.rmfn-vic.com](http://www.rmfn-vic.com); [www.qrmfn.com.au](http://www.qrmfn.com.au); [www.wacrrm.uwa.edu.au/families](http://www.wacrrm.uwa.edu.au/families).

<sup>54</sup> All information on the Doctors Health Advisory Service was sourced from [www.doctorshealth.org.au](http://www.doctorshealth.org.au)

<sup>55</sup> All information regarding the 24 Hour Bush Crisis Line was accessed from [www.bcl.org.au/](http://www.bcl.org.au/)

<sup>56</sup> All information provided regarding Doctor Connect was sourced from [www.doctorconnect.gov.au](http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au)

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
			medical recruitment agencies.	
		2.1.2 Visa process to work in Australia	2.1.2.1 Rural Workforce Agencies can provide advice to Overseas Doctors on their visa requirements. All visa applications will need to be applied for and lodged with the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship	2.1.2.1.1 The contact details of each Rural Workforce Agency is available at <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a> and the contact details for the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship are <a href="http://www.immi.gov.au/">www.immi.gov.au/</a>
		2.1.3 Workplace placement	2.1.3.1 Rural Workforce Agencies <sup>57</sup> implement medical workforce recruitment and retention programs in each state and the Northern Territory to increase the number of doctors in rural and remote communities across Australia. RWAs actively recruit doctors at international trade fairs. They also provide advice to doctors residing overseas and considering working in Australia. RWAs will also provide follow up support to doctors that to come to Australia to practice.	2.1.3.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Any medical professionals considering working in rural and remote areas of Australia from overseas are welcome to contact the Rural Workforce Agency in the State or Territory in which they would like to work. The contact details of each Rural Workforce Agency is available at <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a>
	2.2 Residing in Australia	2.2.1 Schemes to allow non-vocationally registered overseas trained doctors to work in Aus [Medicare provider number restrictions apply to all overseas trained doctors (OTDs)].	2.2.1.1 The five year OTD Scheme is designed to provide an opportunity for suitably qualified OTDs to stay long term in Australia to help address the rural and remote GP shortage. OTDs who are eligible for the scheme are required to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete 5 years of service in an agreed rural location (in some areas this has been reduced to 3 years)</li> <li>2. Pass the FRACGP examination within two years of joining the scheme (unless the OTDs qualifications are considered to be equivalent).</li> <li>3. Obtain permanent residency in Australia after passing the Fellowship of the RACGP exam.</li> </ol> OTDs who have completed their 5 years of service are then eligible to access a unrestricted provider number, which means they can practise anywhere in Australia for the remainder of the moratorium. There are AGDHA approved graded incentive locations for states and Territories. Graded incentives are related to the difficulty of the location/position that reduces the contract period the OTD need to serve before being given an unrestricted provider number by up to two years. Doctors admitted to the 5 year OTD scheme are automatically eligible for the assistance program administered by the Rural Workforce Agency in the applicable state/territory.	2.2.1.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Contact the Rural Workforce Agency in the applicable state for eligibility requirements regarding the five year scheme.

<sup>57</sup> See [www.arrwag.com.au](http://www.arrwag.com.au)

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
			2.2.1.2 The Rural Other Medical Practitioners (ROMPS) Program <sup>58</sup> provides access to the higher A1 Medicare rebate for services provided in Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Area (RRMA) 4-7 locations and defined 'areas of consideration' by non-vocationally recognised medical practitioners who express an interest in achieving vocational recognition. Areas of consideration are areas that are not classified as RRMA 4-7 locations but exhibit the characteristics of rural areas. The ROMPS program recognises the value of services provided in rural areas by non-vocationally recognised medical practitioners and provides substantial financial benefits for their patients. The program provides an incentive to encourage non-vocationally recognised medical practitioners to provide general practice services in RRMA 4-7 locations.	2.2.1.2.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Medical Practitioners are required to complete an application form for the ROMP scheme and receive notification from Medicare Australia that they are approved under the Program before they begin to bill the A1 items. Medicare Australia administers the program on behalf of the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA).
			2.2.1.3 The <i>Rural Locum Relief Program</i> <sup>59</sup> enables overseas trained doctors to have temporary access to the Medicare Benefits Scheme and attract rebates when working in RRMA 4-7 (in some cases RRMA 3).	2.2.1.3.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. The RLRP is administered by the Rural Workforce Agencies (RWA's). See <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a> for contact details.
			2.2.1.4 District of Workforce Shortage exemptions from the Medicare provider number restrictions <sup>60</sup> gives OTDs an exemption from the Medicare provider number restrictions if the doctor agrees to work in a location that has been identified as a DWS. Possessing this exemption enables a doctor to be granted a Medicare provider number and bill for services that will attract benefits from Medicare.	2.2.1.4.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia.  DWSs are determined by the Department of Health and Ageing and are linked to the provision of Medicare provider numbers.

<sup>58</sup> All information on ROMPS was sourced from [www.rwav.com.au](http://www.rwav.com.au)

<sup>59</sup> All information regarding the Rural Locum Relief Program was collected from of Australia. (2003). Biennial Review of the Medicare Provider Legislation. Department of Health and Ageing: Canberra.

<sup>60</sup> All information on District of Workforce Shortage exemptions from the Medicare provider number restrictions was sourced from [www.doctorconnect.gov.au](http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au)

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
		2.2.2 Education and Training	2.2.2.1 The Rural Health Education Foundation <sup>61</sup> provides satellite-based health education for doctors. The programs assist in reducing the level of professional isolation often experienced by health professionals in rural and remote Australia by linking them to sources of medical and health expertise via the Foundation's satellite network and this website. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Rural and Remote Medical Education Online <sup>62</sup> and the Australian Council of Rural and Remote Medicine <sup>63</sup> also provide education and training to rural and remote GPs.	2.2.2.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. All health professionals can access the Rural Health Education Foundation's television programs by joining the network and installing the required equipment.
			2.2.2.2 Rural Workforce Agencies, Divisions of General Practice, Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, Royal Australian College of General Practice etc provide <i>Continuing Medical Education</i> to support the ongoing professional development of GPs; types of CME may include chronic disease management, emergency skills, radiology services and obstetric ultrasound, etc.	2.2.2.2.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. The contact details of each Rural Workforce Agency is available at <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a> and the contact details for each of the Divisions of General Practice is available from <a href="http://www.adgp.com.au">www.adgp.com.au</a>
			2.2.2.3 Education Support Grants generally focus on the following primary areas: Obstetrics; Anaesthetics; GP General Surgery; and Emergency Medicine.	2.2.2.3.1 Most Rural Workforce Agencies offer Education Support Grants. For More information see contact one of the Rural Workforce Agencies listed at <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a>
			2.2.2.4 The RACGP National Rural Faculty's Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice provides useful orientation in general practice in rural Australia, particularly the courses two core modules, working in rural general practice and emergency medicine. The majority of practicing GPs enrolled in this course by distance learning are OTDs.	2.2.2.4.1 For more details contact 1800 636 764 or email <a href="mailto:rural@racgp.org.au">rural@racgp.org.au</a>

<sup>61</sup> All information on the Rural health Education Foundation was sourced from [www.rhef.com.au](http://www.rhef.com.au)

<sup>62</sup> All information on Rural and Remote Education Online was sourced from [www.rrmeo.com](http://www.rrmeo.com)

<sup>63</sup> All information on ACRRM membership was sourced from [www.acrrm.org.au/](http://www.acrrm.org.au/)

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
		2.2.3 Help towards Vocational Registration	2.2.3.1 The OTD assistance scheme <sup>64</sup> is designed to prepare and support OTDs in passing their Australian Medical Council or Fellowship of the RACGP exam. Rural Workforce Agencies in each state and the Northern Territory will facilitate the OTDs access to resources and training designed to prepare the doctor for the relevant exam. Case Managers in each RWA assist the doctor in determining the career pathway they need to take in order to maintain registration or other requirements as necessary.	2.2.3.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. OTDs who are on the Rural Locum Relief Program or the Five Year OTD Scheme are eligible for the OTD assistance scheme. Contact the Rural Workforce Agency in the applicable state for more information.
			2.2.3.2 The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners online learning facility <i>gplearning</i> provides dedicated activities and support programs for Overseas Trained Doctors, particularly and e-mentoring program for OTDs preparing for the FRACGP examination.	2.2.3.2.1 Available anywhere in Australia. Contact the RACGP at <a href="http://www.gplearning.com.au">www.gplearning.com.au</a> or email <a href="mailto:contactus@gplearning.com.au">contactus@gplearning.com.au</a> or call toll free 1800 284 789.
			2.2.3.3 There are specific workshop programs which introduce exam candidates to the techniques and procedures in the FRACGP examination.	2.2.3.3.1 Run by each state and territory faculty of the RACGP for any doctor preparing for the RACGP examination. For further information contact your local faculty of the RACGP via <a href="http://www.racgp.org.au">www.racgp.org.au</a>
		2.2.4 Professional Support	2.2.4.1 Many organisations provide locums on request from doctors for both recreational and professional leave. Please be aware that you need to give as much notice as possible in order to increase your chances of obtaining a Locum.	2.2.4.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. A good place to start when enquiring about locum services would be the Rural Workforce Agencies by getting their details from <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a>
		2.2.5 Family Support	2.2.5.1 The Rural Medical Family Network <sup>65</sup> provides a range of information and support services to assist rural medical families. The RMFN offers a range of programs which may include: activities for families attending medical workshops and conferences; opportunities for personal development and further education; training opportunities for rural medical spouses; seasonal newsletters; meet and greet opportunities; family programs; and crisis assistance.	2.2.5.1.1 Rural Medical Family Networks exist in most state across Australia. Membership is for families of general practitioners practicing in rural and remote areas.
	2.2.6 Accommodation support	2.2.6.1 Relocation grants are available in most states of Australia through the Rural Workforce Agencies. The grants can assist with covering the costs of removal of household contents and travel for the GP and their family (flights/fuel) if a doctor is relocating to a rural or remote area. Grants can be made up to \$20,000.	2.2.6.1.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. The contact details of each Rural Workforce Agency is available at <a href="http://www.arrwag.com.au">www.arrwag.com.au</a>	

<sup>64</sup> All information on the OTD assistance scheme was sourced directly from Tasmanian Divisions of General Practice.

<sup>65</sup> See RMFN websites for more information: [www.rmfn.org.au](http://www.rmfn.org.au); [www.rmfn-sa.com.au](http://www.rmfn-sa.com.au); [www.rmfn-vic.com](http://www.rmfn-vic.com); [www.qrmfn.com.au](http://www.qrmfn.com.au); [www.wacrrm.uwa.edu.au/families](http://www.wacrrm.uwa.edu.au/families).

Type of GP	Stage of Career Cycle	Attractors and Supports	Description of Program	Eligibility Requirements
		2.2.7 Financial Incentives	2.2.7.1 The Rural Retention Program <sup>66</sup> is an initiative that aims to recognise and retain long-serving general practitioners in rural and remote communities that may experience significant difficulties in retaining general practitioners. The major component of the Program is a Central Payments System administered by Medicare Australia, which commenced in December 1999. This part of the Program seeks to recognise general practitioners based on Medicare data on their services in rural and remote locations over a number of years.	2.2.7.1.1 Rural Workforce Agencies in each state and the Northern Territory have the role of monitoring and assessing Flexible Payments System applications under the Rural Retention Program
		2.2.7 Doctor Mental Health and Well Being Services	2.2.7.1 The Doctors Health Advisory Service <sup>67</sup> aims to ensure that no doctor lacks access to health care. Each DHAS operates a 24 hour a day telephone Help Line to provide personal advice to practitioners in difficulties and also provide health promotion and educational information through their web sites. Users of the Helpline are put in contact with a medical practitioner experienced in handling the specific problem and is offered advice over the phone, and, if necessary, recommended to consult a GP, a specialist, or other professional.	2.2.7.1.1 For information on the Doctors Health Advisory Service see <a href="http://www.doctorshealth.org.au/content/view/8/8/">http://www.doctorshealth.org.au/content/view/8/8/</a>
			2.2.7.2 The 24-hr confidential Bush Crisis Line <sup>68</sup> provides support that enhances the well being of multi-disciplinary health practitioners by supporting them and their families to successfully manage the stress associated with remote and rural practice.	2.2.7.2.1 Available in all States and Territories of Australia. Available to all health professionals who work in rural and remote areas of Australia. Bush Crisis line is available by calling 1800 805 391.

<sup>66</sup> All information on the Rural Retention Program was sourced from [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

<sup>67</sup> All information on the Doctors Health Advisory Service was sourced from [www.doctorshealth.org.au](http://www.doctorshealth.org.au)

<sup>68</sup> All information regarding the 24 Hour Bush Crisis Line was accessed from [www.bcl.org.au/](http://www.bcl.org.au/)

## The Australian Rural and Remote Workforce Agencies Group (ARRWAG)

ARRWAG is a national peak body committed to increasing health service provision in rural and remote areas. The number of practicing health professionals in rural and remote communities needs to increase in order for rural and remote Australians to be able to access quality health care services. ARRWAG does this by providing leadership to its members - seven Rural Workforce Agencies (RWAs) that operate in each State and the Northern Territory of Australia. ARRWAG also advocates on behalf of the Rural Workforce Agencies and provides timely advice to Government on medical workforce issues. The central focus of ARRWAG is on national health workforce policy. As such, ARRWAG provides information and policy advice on health workforce issues through the provision of workforce data analysis, planning and research, program development and evaluation.

ARRWAGs member bodies, the Rural Workforce Agencies (RWAs), implement medical workforce recruitment and retention programs in their jurisdictions to increase the number of doctors in rural and remote communities across Australia. RWAs undertake health workforce planning, actively recruit doctors and provide support to doctors and their families so that they will stay in these communities.

Rural Workforce Agencies are individual entities in their own right. ARRWAG is a federation of RWAs and provides support to each Rural Workforce Agency at a national level. The RWAs across Australia are:

- General Practice and Primary Health Care Northern Territory (GPPHCNT)
- NSW Rural Doctors Network (NSWRDN)
- Health Workforce Queensland (HWQ)
- Rural Workforce Agency Victoria (RWAV)
- Rural Doctors Workforce Agency (RDWA) in South Australia
- General Practice Workforce (Tas)
- Western Australian Centre for Remote and Rural Medicine (WACRRM)

ARRWAG is also the auspicing body for the National Rural Health Network (NRHN), the national body that represents the interests of undergraduate medical, allied health and nursing students. ARRWAGs relationship with students provides a unique opportunity to gain an insight into the needs and interests of the future rural and remote health workforce. The NRHN's primary aim is to support and link rural health clubs across Australia, through a broad emphasis on the multidisciplinary approach to health care delivery within rural and remote communities. The rural health clubs aim to increase interest in rural health amongst university undergraduate health students, increase interest in university health courses amongst rural high school students and strengthen the knowledge, understanding, motivation, and commitment to work in rural areas of Australia.