

# TASMANIAN RURAL GENERALIST PATHWAY

August 2023



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## From the Director

### Building a rural and remote health workforce with place-based education

This month the Medical Journal of Australia (MJA) published a seminal rural supplement that summarized the evidence on how we can build our rural and remote health workforce. You can read the supplement on the MJA website [here](#).



We are very pleased that Tasmania has so many of these elements, but we aim to do more. This month we supported the University of Tasmania to apply for more rural medical student places so we can train local students closer to home. There are many barriers to studying medicine and training outside cities outlined in this month's MJA and delivering place-based education would enable more rural students to study locally and follow their postgraduate rural pathway.

Stronger rural placements are a key element in our long-term rural recruitment. Later this month we will be able to offer grants for infrastructure for practices to expand training, we look forward to working closely with you in delivering more training places in General Practice.

Enjoy reading about all the events that have happened over the last two months, and a summary of all those coming up.

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## Rural Clinical School Year 2 Rural Week

The University of Tasmania Rural Clinical School and Launceston Clinical School were excited to host Year 2 rural week in the North and North West of the state. Students from Hobart Year 2 spent two days learning rural clinical skills in Launceston and Burnie. Students got a chance to find out all the benefits of living and studying rurally. The students also got to visit the Australian Maritime College to learn essential water survival skills and first aid in a marine environment. RG Dr Chris Holden, who is based on the east coast gave an inspirational talk about his work across Australia and the world, putting these rural skills into practice. We look forward to welcoming these students back for their clinical years.



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## ‘Better than Awesome’ – New Consulting Skills Workshop for International Doctors

In early August we ran a whole day workshop for international graduates covering consulting skills and written communication. We had 14 participants who had trained in 12 different countries and now working on the NW coast. Consulting skills remain one of the barriers for international doctors to getting their AMC exams and onto GP training schemes. This workshop looked specifically at how Australian graduates are taught and assessed on communication skills and ran small group OSCE’s and feedback sessions so the doctors could practice these skills. One of the participants, who has been here two years, said the course was ‘better than awesome’, explaining they learned many things that will help them succeed in the Australian setting.

Many thanks to our awesome participants.

The initiative was a joint venture with the Hub, Postgraduate Medical Education Council of Tasmania and Tasmanian Health Service and led by Laura Verasdonck, Alex Kear and Tharani Ramasamy. Many thanks to the team for putting this together.

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## New John Flynn Placement with the TAC

We are excited to have a new prevocational doctor placement through the John Flynn Prevocational Doctor Program with the Aboriginal Health Service.

Palawa woman and junior doctor Claire Griffiths is the first person to be part of the program, splitting her time working in emergency medicine at the Mersey Community Hospital and in the AHS during her 13-week placement.

Read more about this placement in [The Advocate](#).

JFPDP placements enable junior doctors to spend a 13-week rotation in general practice. If you are interested in hosting a junior doctor and supporting the next generation of GP’s please email [Tas Rural Pathways](#).

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## Point-of-Care Ultrasound Workshop

We had an amazing point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS) workshop in Burnie in early August. The course was facilitated by Dr Louisa Lee, who has recently joined the THS NW emergency department team as a consultant with special interest in POCUS.

27 participants learnt core ultrasound skills including:

- eFast
- deep venous thrombosis
- heart and lung ultrasound
- intravenous line placement and foreign object retrieval
- musculoskeletal soft tissue
- first trimester transabdominal obstetric ultrasound.



We look forward to hearing from participants on how they put their skills to use.

Thanks to RACGP Rural for organising this important workshop and all the facilitators and student volunteers that made this such a good session.

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## Congratulations to the Palliative Care Awards Recipients for 2023

Congratulation to Dr Cyril Latt, Dr Jane Cooper and Dr David Knowles for recognition of their work in Palliative Care.



**PalliativeCare**  
TASMANIA

Cyril Latt was the winner of the Outstanding Palliative Care professional. Cyril has worked at St Marys now for 16 years. To read more about the awards go to the Palliative Care Tasmania [website](#).

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## Remote Supervision Now Possible with Both Colleges

Using the experience of high-quality training providers such as Remote Vocational Training Scheme, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) have developed guidelines and models of remote supervision that will suit many communities. This will allow more communities to have registrars, even where there are no supervisors. We look forward to working with more remote registrars and supporting this important initiative. If you are a practice interested in having a remote supervisor and registrar, or a registrar that wants to train where there isn't an existing supervisor contact the Colleges.

For more information and to express interest, visit the RACGP Remote Supervision Program [page](#) or the ACRRM Remote Supervision Guidelines [page](#).

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## Launceston General Hospital EMET Training hub

Staff across Hospitals North Primary Health sites will soon receive specialist emergency medical training. The LGH has been awarded status as an Emergency Medicine and Training (EMET) hub, an initiative funded by a Commonwealth grant to the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine. An exciting High Acuity Low Occurrence (HALO) workshop is already planned at the beautiful White Sands Estate.



Watch out for more courses starting soon!



## New Free Service for GPs

What is the service? The GP Psychiatry Support Line gives GPs direct access to qualified psychiatrists for advice regarding the mental health of their patients. GPs can call 1800 161 718 between 7am and 7pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). The psychiatrists can offer advice on a wide range of topics including medication diagnosis treatment options safety planning referral pathways psychosocial matters. It is not about triaging or referring consumers to a psychiatrist; it's about keeping patients whose conditions can be treated within primary care under the care of their GP. It is not for crisis situations. The psychiatrists will not diagnose patients or offer a second opinion on a diagnosis; rather they will support GPs with the information and advice they need to assess and care for their patients.



### Who is it for?

This service is for GPs seeking advice about their patients (all ages). It is not for the patients to use themselves and cannot be used by other care providers.

### Who delivers it?

The Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care has engaged ProCare Mental Health Services to deliver the service. ProCare, a not-for-profit organisation, has been operating the phone line in parts of Australia since 2018, and the service went national on 1 July this year.

### How much does it cost?

This service is free for GPs to use, thanks to Australian Government funding. How can GPs access the service? GPs first need to register by calling 1800 161 718 or going online to [gpsupport.org.au](https://gpsupport.org.au) (AHPRA registration and practice details needed; allow 24 hours for online registration to take effect). After registering, GPs can call 1800 161 718 between 7am and 7pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) or book a session online. After an inquiry, the GP will receive a digital report within one business day. More information is available on the [GP Psychiatry Support Line website](#).



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## Rural Health Funding Inequity

The “Evidence base for additional investment in rural health in Australia” report released in June by the National Rural Health Alliance shows Australia’s governments spend \$848 less per person per year on people living outside major cities. At the same time, people in rural and remote areas including people in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on average have lower socioeconomic status, record poorer health outcomes, and face greater practical obstacles to accessing services due to remoteness. Read more on the National Rural Health Alliance website [here](#).

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## 2023 Conferences

RMA 2023 Hobart 18-21 October 2023. For more information, visit the [ACRRM RMA23 page](#).



WONCA 2023 Sydney 26-29 October 2023. For more information, visit the [WONCA2023 page](#).

AIDA23 Hobart 16<sup>th</sup> of November. For more information visit the [AIDA2023 page](#).



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## Get Involved in the JFPDP

The John Flynn Prevocational Doctor Program (JFPDP) has started in 2023. The Program places interns and Resident Medical Officers in GP practices for a 12-week term as part of their hospital-based rotations. The Scottsdale practice, who have been training junior doctors in for many years, have watched these junior doctors come back as registrars and then rural GP's and RG's. If your practice is interested in being a part of this important program, [contact the Tas Rural Generalist team!](#)



## Education and Employment Opportunities

### GP TRAINING POSITION REMOTE VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHEME

#### TARGETED RECRUITMENT

#### ST MARYS, TASMANIA



- Commencement January 2024
- Full-time position
- Comprehensive GP services plus hospital cover
- Must hold general registration & emergency medicine certificate
- 3-4 year GP training program delivered by distance education & remote supervision leading to Fellowship of ACRRM or RACGP
- Training is fully funded by the Australian Government
- Reduction in 10 year moratorium to 4 years available



For further information, contact Fran Robinson at HR+ [fr Robinson@hrplustas.com.au](mailto:fr Robinson@hrplustas.com.au) or (03) 6332 8600



#### Maternity emergency course

CRANaplus is holding a two-day course in Hobart on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 November on maternity emergency care.

The course enables the remote health workforce to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to provide emergency care for expectant mothers and their babies in a remote or isolated setting.

The cost is \$950, or \$850 for CRANaplus members. Learn more and register at the [CRANaplus website](#).

#### Emerging Minds' infant mental health suite

Improve infants and toddlers' mental health with Emerging Minds' free resources. Emerging Minds has created a suite of free online courses and resources for professionals looking to support the mental health and wellbeing of young children and their families. Visit the [Emerging Minds website](#) to browse the range of resources and subscribe to the Emerging Minds newsletter for the latest updates and releases.

#### Utas Hub Communication Skills for Medical Professionals

Across multiple sessions throughout September and October, Anne Kiely from the University of Tasmania International School will deliver a practical language support program for clinicians in the North West to develop their workplace communication skills.

To register, please complete [this form](#).

#### ACRRM Education Weekend

The ACRRM Education Weekend is a dynamic learning experience and a chance to forge meaningful connections with other professionals. Held in Launceston on 23 and 24 September, this two-day event promises to be an enriching experience with valuable educational activities, networking opportunities, and interactive sessions. For more information and to register, visit the [ACRRM website](#).

#### ACRRM Rural Emergency Obstetrics Training

Held in Hobart on Wednesday 25/10/23, member cost \$1,695, non-member \$1,865. Register at the [ACRRM website](#).

#### ACRRM Advanced Life Support Level 2 training

Held in Hobart on Tuesday 24/10/23, member cost \$1,395, non-member \$1,545. Register at the [ACRRM website](#).

#### Emergencies in General Practice- Live Webinar

Held on 26th July, 2nd August, 9th August and 16th August from 7:30pm. Register at the [Medcast website](#)

## Doctors for Women in Rural Medicine online meet-up

RACGP Rural's Doctors for Women in Rural Medicine (DWRM) Committee aims to elevate, empower and encourage women working in rural practice by working to identify and meet their unique interests, challenges and needs and empower them to reach their full professional capacity, in turn supporting rural communities.

The DWRM will hold its next online member meet-up on Thursday 31 August 2023 at 7:30pm AEST.

DWRM invites you to come along and hear from Curtis on 'it's a man issue', followed by a discussion on the role of the general practitioner and the opportunity to connect with rural and remote members from across the country.

Register on the RACGP [website](#).

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## Department of Veterans' Affairs Update

The Department of Veterans' Affairs has released a New DVA quick guide for GPs and specialists treating veterans with a cancer diagnosis. The new quick guide provides the basics on how GPs and specialists can help. Read more at the Department of Veterans' Affairs [website](#).

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## 'I have a GP' Project



A new engagement project promoting doctor wellbeing and the importance of doctors having a GP will run over the next month with videos featuring doctors at different career stages detailing why all doctors should have GP.

Developed by the Australian Medical Association (AMA), the project will run over the next month with videos featuring doctors at different career stages.

Videos will be posted on the AMA's [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#) platforms, and doctors are encouraged to reshare the posts with their own experiences using the hashtag #ihaveagp.

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