

TASMANIAN RURAL GENERALIST PATHWAY

October 2023



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From the Director

As the holiday season approaches, I wish you all some well-deserved time out for family friends and refreshment.

It has been a busy year for Tasmanian Rural Generalist Co-ordination unit, and I am sad to be stepping down from my RG role, but I am delighted to pass the baton to my successor, Brian Treanor. Brian will bring a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the role, and we all look forward to working with him.

Reflecting on the past two years, I am immensely proud of what we have achieved together. From the expansion of junior doctor placements to the increased number of scholarship holders on a pathway to RG, and the commencement of the Single Employment Model for GP registrars - each milestone represents our collective dedication to advancing rural healthcare in our region.

I am excited to announce that we have been awarded an RACGP research award to look at the impact of our integrated pathway and what further work needs to be done to support medical students and junior doctors who want to stay and train rurally.



I am continuing in my role as Director for the Rural Clinical school and will continue to advocate for more rural training and resources.

I am grateful for all the support I have had over the years and the positive changes we've been able to make.

Wishing you a joyful holiday season and a successful New Year.

Message from Brian- the New Rural Pathways Director

I am really looking forward to taking on the role of Director Rural Pathways.

Although I originally hail from Ireland, I lived in Tasmania for 25 years before moving to Far North Queensland in 2016, to work as a Rural Generalist with an advanced skill in anaesthetics. Prior to undertaking my medical studies at UTAS, I had a career in nursing and worked in the community services sector. I am keen to add to the tremendous work that the Rural Pathways team have undertaken to date. I look forward to meeting people when I return “home” to start in the new role in January 2024.

Single Employer Model

Late July 2023 saw the beginning of the statewide Single Employer Model as we welcomed 4 registrars across the state into the pilot. 2 Registrars in the South, 1 in the North and 1 in the Northwest. Australian Minister for Health and Aged Care, Mark Butler and Tasmanian Minister for Health and Aged Care, Guy Barnett traveled to a participating site in Deloraine to officially announce the start of the pilot on the 19th of September. Read more from the media release on the [Premier of Tasmania's website](#)

We are looking forward to expanding the SEM pilot in 2024, with 44 practices now able to host registrars employed under the SEM pilot.

Grants for Infrastructure and Supervision

As part of the Single Employer Model pilot there will also be grants available to support increased training capacity in the near future so watch this space.

The Rural Medical Workforce Centre

The Rural Medical Workforce Centre officially opened at the Mersey Community Hospital in October. The centre will provide training opportunities to medical graduates, trainee doctors and health professionals resulting in more doctors and nurses on the North West coast. For more information, please visit the [Department of Health](#) website.

New Scholarship Holders

We welcome

Clay Ritchie
Crystelle Vanderplas
Freya Prebble
Lauren O'Sullivan

Raymond Pavlov
Seniya Wijewardena
Senudi Wijewardena
Sophia Casanova-Clarke

To our Rural pathways programme. The scholarship holders are staying on in the North and North West of the state and will have the opportunity to spend time in rural practice.



L-R Freya Prebble, Lauren O'Sullivan, Prof, Lizzi Shires, Crystelle Vanderplas, and Sophia Casanova-Clarke



Clay Ritchie



L-R, Senudi Wijewardena, Seniya Wijewardena, Dr Ben Dodds, and Raymond Pavlov

New Practices Hosting Interns

We welcome Don Medical Centre and Longford Medical Centre and Newstead Medical to our practices who will host junior doctors in 2024. It's exciting to have more practices for our junior doctors to experience the world of general practice. Increasing junior doctors in General Practice will increase the number of registrars coming into our practices – if you are interested in hosting a junior doctor please reach out to the TRGP team at tasrural.pathways@health.tas.gov.au

The Pathway to More Rural Doctors: The Role of Universities

Lizzi, along with Matthew R McGrail, Zeldá Doyle, Lara Fuller, Tarun Sen Gupta, and Lucie Walters recently had an article published in the Medical Journal of Australia - *The pathway to more rural doctors: the role of universities*.

The article discusses the importance of growing a workforce of our own and the critical role medical schools play in addressing the shortage.

To read the full article visit the [Medical Journal of Australia](#) website.

FRACGP to FRACGP-RG: A Streamlined Approach

Are you a rural GP with substantive experience working in rural or remote areas?

RACGP is making it easier for FRACGP and FARGPs to be assessed for a Rural Generalist (RG) Fellowship through recognition of prior learning and experience. This streamlined assessment process for RG is part of our continued commitment to members supporting our regional and remote communities. Plus, they're waiving the fee until 17 May 2024.

To apply for RPLE as a FRACGP, [click here](#).

To apply for RPLE as a FARGP, [click here](#).

Conference Updates

FRAME

We had an amazing nation-wide conference held in Devonport in October which almost 100 people attended from across the country (and internationally) as well as 40+ delegates on Zoom. FRAME is a collaborative effort of all Rural Clinical Schools and Rural Workforce Hubs across Australia. Medical educators who attended had the opportunity to engage with experts, explore innovative solutions and collaborate on strategies to increase the number of rural doctors.

This event not only provided a brilliant academic programme but also showcased the scenic North West region of Tasmania to participants from across Australia. We had some great media coverage and even made the front page of the [Advocate](#).

RMA 23

RMA 23 was held in Hobart, so it was an excellent opportunity for Tasmania to shine.

Rural Clinical School (RSC) students and staff presented posters and gave presentations at RMA covering diverse topics such as bulk billing decision making and managing chronic pain in rural areas. It was brilliant to see so many RCS alumni who have been working in rural and remote Australia who were also in attendance.



WONCA (World Organisation of Family Doctors)

Australia held the international WONCA conference for 2023.

WONCA was one of the biggest conferences we have ever attended with over 4000 delegates from around the world. We had a dedicated rural stream, and we were proud to sponsor the rural emergency preconference workshop. We presented a workshop on expanding and supporting rural supervision and I was proud to share the stage with colleagues from across Australia looking at how we address this important issue to create more RGs for the future.

It was great to see some of the Rural Clinical School students and staff also attended WONCA and presented outstanding posters.

DRIVERS Conference

Congratulations to our 2024 TRGP Scholarship holder, Crystelle, who attended and presented at the Monash DRIVERS Conference in Bendigo in September. Her presentation about her GP placement on King Island was awarded the DRIVERS Regional Training Hub Director's Award for Excellence.



Aida 23 Conference in Hobart

It was a privilege to attend AIDA 23 and to catch up with so many friends and colleagues. Monty, an RG Scholarship holder, opened the conference with a welcome to country in language, which helped us reflect on the space between the stars. Monty is undertaking her intern year in Launceston before heading off to Cairns next year for more RG training.

Rural Generalists Recognised at 2023 Palliative Care Awards

In August, Dr Cyril Latt, Rural Generalist at St Mary's Community Health Centre, was awarded winner of Outstanding Palliative Care Professional at the 2023 Palliative Care Awards. Dr Jane Cooper, Rural Generalist at Don Medical Centre, was also recognised as a finalist and Dr David Knowles, General Practitioner at Glebe Hill Family Practice was awarded with runner up. Congratulations to all recognised for their dedication and hard work. For more information on the awards, please visit the [Palliative Care Tasmanian website](#).

ACRRM and RACGP Dental Workshop

In September TRGP sponsored a Dental Workshop for General Practice delivered by the Tasmanian Health Service - Northern Dental Centre in Launceston.

This interactive workshop focused on the role General Practitioners have in assessing, diagnosing, preventing and managing oral diseases.

And included practical sessions on:

- Extraoral and intraoral examinations
- Dental local anaesthesia on a manikin
- Temporary fillings
- Dental trauma management, including splinting teeth



Future GP workforce

GPSN's National Chair, Sarah Bresnehan, has released an article outlining the importance of early exposure to general practice and sparking interest in the field for medical students.

Our members continually tell us the importance of quality early exposure to general practice at the beginning of their journey, and this work needs to be done before hospital training. Our GPSN members want to connect with general practice, understand it, and be supported in professional peer exchange with existing GPs early on in their medical school experience.

We all know that early positive impressions of general practice will go a long way to increasing the number of medical students becoming GPs. GPSN members want an opportunity to get to know general practice and GPs early in their first few years of training.

Read more of Sarah's article and her thoughts on a new approach to addressing the national GP shortage on the [GPSN website](#).

WIP Rural Generalist Advance Skills

The new Workforce Incentive Program (WIP) Rural Advanced Skills payment is a time-limited program, recognising services delivered between 1 January 2023 and 31 December 2025. It will provide up to three annual payments per stream for services provided during 2023, 2024 and 2025. The new payment includes two incentive payment types, each worth up to \$10,500 per year:

- Stream 1: For GPs and Rural Generalists working in emergency medicine settings or providing after hours coverage in locations where hospital emergency services are unavailable.
- Stream 2: For GPs and Rural Generalists with eligible advanced procedural or non-procedural advanced skills. These skills include (but are not limited to) First Nations Health, Mental Health, Obstetrics, Surgery and Anaesthetics.

The Rural Advanced Skills payments are scaled to encourage service delivery in more regional/remote areas. Doctors will be able to submit an annual application for payment in coming months for services provided in 2023 for payment after 1 January 2024. Further information on the payment, including Program Guidelines, is available from the Department of Health's website.

Application for the recognition of Rural Generalist Medicine as a new field of specialty practice

The Medical Board of Australia is consulting on a joint application from the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners proposing that Rural Generalist Medicine be recognised under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as a new field of specialty practice within the current specialty of General Practice.

- Consultation paper - Application for recognition of a new field of specialty practice - Rural Generalist Medicine [PDF](#) (331 KB), [Word version](#) (274 KB, DOCX)

ACRRM and RACGP application and associated documents

1. [Rural generalist medicine - Initial \(Stage I\) proposal and attachments for recognition of specialty practice](#) (1.35 MB, PDF)
2. [Rural generalist medicine - additional information to support initial \(Stage I\) proposal for recognition](#) (7.70 MB, PDF)
3. [Rural generalist medicine - information to support the Stage 2 assessment process](#) (6.29 MB, PDF)

Please provide written submissions by email, marked: 'Consultation on the recognition of Rural Generalist Medicine' to medboardconsultation@ahpra.gov.au by close of business on **Tuesday 12 December 2023**.

Link up with other Tasmanian RG's

Did you know there is a Tasmanian RG Facebook group? A place we can ask questions, share advice on training posts and discuss rural health issues in Tasmania. If you would like to join us and share your story please come and find us on [facebook](#).

The Tasmanian Rural Generalist Pathway is supported by funding from the Australian Government under the National Rural Generalist Pathway Initiative