

Hon Stephen Wade MLC Minister for Health and Wellbeing

Monday 3 May 2021

New Training Program to Boost Rural Medical Workforce

In a first for South Australia, a new training program designed to boost the rural medical workforce is being introduced as part of the Marshall Liberal Government's \$20 million Rural Health Workforce Strategy.

Minister for Health and Wellbeing Stephen Wade said the Rural Generalist Program South Australia (RGPSA) will help attract, train and retain a skilled and sustainable rural medical workforce.

"South Australia faces many challenges in recruiting, training and developing the health professionals needed to deliver health services in rural areas," said Minister Wade.

"That's why the Marshall Liberal Government has a focus on boosting the rural medical workforce, and this training program will play a key role in helping us secure the rural medical workforce South Australia needs for the future.

"This year more than 100 health professionals are taking part in the program across South Australia, including a new anaesthetic position and a new advanced skill training model at Kadina and Lyell McEwin Hospital.

"There is increasing demand for skilled GPs in regional areas, and this fit-for-purpose training program will provide a range of training opportunities for clinicians to broaden the range of skills to support them to deliver high quality health care to patients in regional areas.

"We are committed to skilling health workers and investing in our country clinicians to ensure they can continue to deliver high quality care, closer to home."

Rural Support Service Chief Clinical Advisor, Dr Hendrika Meyer, said the program will provide high quality rural medical training to clinicians which will help meet the needs of regional communities for both now and into the future.

"It is important we increase the number of highly trained and skilled health professionals to be available in regional communities so they can provide better health outcomes for patients in regional communities," Dr Meyer said.

"The Rural Generalist Program will provide trainees advanced skill training positions at regional Local Health Networks to help further strengthen the delivery of care to patients in regional areas.

"We look forward to welcoming trainees to our regions and continuing to work on delivering a stronger rural medical workforce."

In the 2021 training year, there will be:

- 12 rural interns completing the full year of training
- 40 metropolitan interns completing a rural general practice rotation (number doubled from 2020)

- 15 metropolitan interns completing rural emergency rotations (new for 2021)
- 12 full-time rural postgraduate year 2s (PGY2s) (up from four in 2020)
- eight metropolitan PGY2s completing a rural rotation in 2021 (up from five in 2020)
- 13 rural GP registrars completing their advanced skill training (up from five in 2020)
- one rural GP anaesthetics training position (new for 2021).

The Rural Generalist Coordination Unit is coordinating the implementation of RGPSA in collaboration with key stakeholders, and metropolitan and regional Local Health Networks to expand rural medical training.

Information about the program, rural generalists and other opportunities for trainee medical officers in SA will be available at a new dedicated website www.ruralgeneralist.sa.gov.au, featuring new RGPSA branding.

Applications for rural training positions and internships in the 2022 training year will open in May 2021 and close in June 2021. Applications for post graduate year 2+ and advanced skills training positions in the 2022 training year will open in early June 2021 and close in late June 2021.

For more information or to express your interest in the program go to www.ruralgeneralist.sa.gov.au or email Health.SARuralGeneralistTraining@sa.gov.au.