



RURAL GENERALIST PROGRAM

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

A day in the life of a
Rural Generalist

March 2022



Dr Gerard Quigley

Dr Gerard Quigley is an experienced Rural Generalist working at the Lower Eyre Family Practice and Cummins and District Memorial Hospital.

In this month's 'A day in the life of Rural Generalist' news article, Dr Quigley tells us about the benefits of studying, living and working in a rural community and the opportunities associated with pursuing a career in rural generalism.

Dr Quigley lives and works in Cummins, which is situated in the very heart of the Lower Eyre Peninsula, South Australia, a short 70km drive from the regional centre of Port Lincoln located along spectacular coastlines and is a key service hub for surrounding areas (as pictured below).

Gerard grew up in Adelaide, SA, and reflects that he was fortunate to have gained early exposure to rural by undertaking some of his undergraduate, Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) with The University of Adelaide, elective components in Yorketown located in the southern Yorke Peninsula of SA.

“As a resident, I enjoyed obstetrics and gynaecology and anaesthetic posts as well as Emergency Department (ED) work. A Rural Generalist role, as it’s now called, gave me the opportunity to pursue all these areas and to develop vital skills in General Practice.

The bit that is a bonus is the community side of it including designing and delivering care in a team-based approach.”



Cummins Lookout, Eyre Peninsula, Source: Tourism Australia, Photographer Greg Snell

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The Lower Eyre Family Practice where Gerard works has a focus on preventative care and coordination of care and is supported by a GP led Primary Health Care Team. Gerard also works at the Cummins and District Memorial Hospital, where there is an ED and he provides care to acute inpatients and medical care for older adult patients.



The Cummins and District Memorial Hospital provides acute, outreach and aged care services to the communities of Cummins and outlying smaller communities. The hospital is located on Tumby Bay Road, alongside the Lower Eyre Family Practice, where Dr Quigley also works.

Dr Quigley shared with us that the type of clinical experiences and tasks performed to support and meet the healthcare needs of your community do evolve and change over time (and can include adapting service delivery due to the closure of theatres or delivery suites), but he can't imagine doing anything else.

When asked about his experience living and working in a regional area and connecting with the local community, Dr Quigley says:

"The level of support provided to me by the community I work in is, I am sure, related to the deep regard and feeling of ownership these towns have for their health service. I do feel respected, and while our work is seen as essential, there is also an understanding about respecting privacy and time off, as it is a necessary circuit breaker.

I enjoy the people, hearing their stories and sharing some of their most important moments. Being let in when people are happiest, saddest or most vulnerable is a privilege."

For Gerard, one of the best things about living and working in rural has been having a young family who have had all the benefits of living in a nurturing community.

Gerard would give the following advice to trainees considering training in rural and becoming a Rural Generalist:

"Do it! Think what you want to be and then make it happen where you want to live."

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