



RURAL GENERALIST PROGRAM

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

A day in the life of a
Rural Generalist

April 2022

In this month's 'A day in the life of Rural Generalist' news article, we hear from Dr Wissam Ghamrawi. Dr Ghamrawi is a Rural General Practitioner who works at the Boston Bay Family Health Practice in Port Lincoln, South Australia.

Dr Wissam Ghamrawi

Originally born in Canberra, Dr Ghamrawi grew up in Lebanon and is currently living between Port Lincoln and Adelaide, SA.

Reflecting on what led him to work in rural, Wissam told us that he knew early on that he was not going to be satisfied with just one speciality in medicine and initially had reservations about general practice, as at that time, he had thought being a GP would entail referring most patients on to specialist services and only managing simple cases. This did not sit well after having invested many years of hard work into studying for medical school and his junior hospital tenure.



"I tried general surgery, intensive care, orthopaedics, emergency medicine and I loved them all but not enough to pursue just one of them. So, I decided to try rural general practice as I found that many rural generalists have shared similar interests and never wanted to narrow themselves down to one field. I liked to have a variety of skillsets as well as the confidence, responsibility, diversity, freedom, community respect and the creativity that a speciality could deliver."

Dr Ghamrawi also shared with us that he has been fortunate to accumulate a variety of different clinical experiences by becoming a Rural Generalist, and as a new fellow, he is now practicing as an independent Rural GP at Boston Bay Family Health Practice.

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Wissam feels confident knowing that he has the support of senior GPs in the clinic whenever the need arises. He is frequently involved in the Emergency Department roster at the Port Lincoln Hospital and Health Service, as a senior clinician and on occasion assists visiting surgeons in theatre, which all adds to his broad scope and skillsets.

"I enjoy teaching medical students who parallel consult with me in their 5th and 6th year of medical school which helps them gain practical experience that builds their confidence and critical thinking in medicine. I also enjoy supporting visiting interns and RMOs in their rotations to Port Lincoln which encourages me to stay up to date with the latest guidelines."

When asked about how he has found living and working in a regional area and connecting with the local communities, Wissam told us that he has been lucky to work across multiple rural clinics in South Australia and has found them all to be very welcoming. Dr Ghamrawi has found rural communities to be very friendly, resilient, and understanding and shares that he has even found:

"... that they treat you like family and sometimes share their produce with the clinic. The rural community has developed a sense of confidence and built significant trust in their GPs who know them and their families very well. It is easier to address the bio-psycho-social elements of health and wellbeing while practicing rurally."

Wissam's favourite part of his current role is being able to connect with people whether they are kids, adults, elderly or even medical students and junior doctors. The reward is huge when you realise that you have made a positive impact in someone else's life.

In his spare time, Dr Ghamrawi has a great time in Port Lincoln going for bike rides, long beach walks, weightlifting and meditating.

The advice Wissam has for trainee's considering training in rural and becoming a Rural Generalist is the following:

"The role is diverse and may look too broad and challenging but it is doable. You can diversify as well as sub-specialise. Meanwhile, imposter syndrome chases many high achieving individuals regardless of their speciality area, but we all continue to learn. If you love diversity and autonomy, then it is worth a try. Every person's experience is different so please reach out and ask as many people as you can."



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