



Dr Emma Wang's Story



Dr Emma Wang tells us about the wealth of experience she's had living and working in rural South Australia and how receiving a RGPSA Scholarship has helped her to upskill in her journey to becoming a Rural Generalist and prepared her to work independently and confidently in a rural emergency department setting.

Emma is currently a GP Registrar employed at the South Coast District Hospital located at Victor Harbor, and part of the Barossa Hills Fleurieu Local Health Network.

Dr Wang undertook medical training in China prior to coming to South Australia and working for four years in the Emergency Department at the Lyell McEwin Hospital. Before entering general practice training, she enjoyed the intense and exciting work in a major tertiary ED, but also constantly felt that something was missing. Emma told us:

"I wanted to be able to spend more time with patients and have more involvement in every aspect of my patients' care. When I saw the training post and learned about becoming a Rural Generalist, I realised this is exactly what I have been looking for!"

With her mind made up, Emma opted into rural general practice and undertook her first clinical term in Balaklava, a small town 100km north of Adelaide. Working at the Balaklava Soldiers' Memorial District Hospital, Dr Wang treated all kinds of medical emergencies ranging from injuries, heart attack, stroke to sepsis. In addition to the ED, she also worked across the only clinic in the town, further broadening her scope of practice where she says:

"...I saw all sorts of skin lesion, provided community palliative care to patients with terminal cancer, listened to patients with mental health issues, walked through the pregnancy journey with my patients and gave immunisations to their children. This year consolidated my thoughts about rural medicine. I realised rural medicine is a great fit for me, this is what I want to do."



Earlier this year, Emma submitted an application to the Rural Generalist Program South Australia (RGPSA) for a scholarship to enable her to undertake Emergency Medicine Diploma training, including funding to cover Advanced Paediatric Life Support and Emergency Trauma Management workshops.

We asked Dr Wang how this training will benefit the rural community where she works and what she hoped to achieve by undertaking the training:

“The training has prepared me to be able to safely deal with nearly all medical emergencies in a rural setting. I hope to be a rural GP specialised in emergency medicine and paediatrics.”

The RGPSA Scholarship has helped me to upskill in my journey to becoming a Rural Generalist. I used the scholarship to complete Emergency Medicine Diploma training, which prepared me to work independently and confidently in rural ED settings.”

Dr Wang shared with us her insights on what it's like to go rural and quipped:

“Living and working in a rural area is not as boring as many of us are led to believe. On the contrary, it provides a flexible lifestyle and makes the work even more enjoyable. I like the fact that the nurses and doctors working in the ED know and are genuinely more caring to their patients. I like chatting to my patients and getting to know where the best hiking places are that I can go to with my family. It helped me to have a deeper connection to local community outside of work.”

Looking ahead, Emma told us next year she will be doing her paediatric advanced skill term at the Women's and Children's Hospital, followed by an outer rural clinic placement. After finishing her training, Dr Wang will continue to pursue her passion for rural medicine and work in a regional town in both the Emergency Department as well as General Practice.

On a final note, we asked Dr Wang what advice she has for trainees considering training in rural and becoming a Rural Generalist?

“Try to get rotations in your intern year to have exposure to rural medicine. If you like to do hands on procedures and a flexible lifestyle, then this is the right specialty for you. If you have decided to choose rural medicine, try to have a couple RMO years in a tertiary hospital and do as many different rotations as you can, Paediatric and ED experience is especially useful.”



Image: Victor Harbor 'The Bluff', South Australia

Scholarships and Training Support

The RGPSA Scholarships and Training Support Grants provide rural junior doctors and Fellowed GPs with additional access to training that meet key skill needs for our regional communities.

For further information and eligibility criteria visit:

<https://www.ruralgeneralist.sa.gov.au/resources/scholarships-and-grants/>

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