



Rural expands your perspective on what working as a doctor can be like.

Read about Dr Lakshmi Sunderasan's career journey to General Practitioner Registrar undertaking advanced specialised training in anaesthetics and her advice when moving to regional and rural areas.

Dr Lakshmi Sunderasan

After graduating from the University of Sydney and spending a few years working in rural New South Wales and Tasmania, Dr Lakshmi Sunderasan made the move to train in a metro blended training program in Adelaide. She is now completing her advanced skills training in anaesthetics



through the Australian College Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), with placements at the Lyell McEwin and Modbury Hospitals.

Applying for the Rural Generalist Anaesthesia (RGA) Training Program has allowed Dr Sunderasan to gain a broader range of theoretical and practical skills, including airway management, drug pharmacology, physiology and crisis management.

A hands-on individual with a true passion for the fast-paced and procedurally driven parts of anaesthesia, Dr Sunderasan says anaesthesia offers everything she loves about clinical work – from airway and line insertion to mastering regional techniques.

“Anaesthetics is attractive because you get to see and change human physiology and pharmacology in real time - which is very fascinating.”

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When moving to a new rural area, Lakshmi says it helps to jump right in and get involved in activities that interest you. For her, this has been a great way to meet new people and build relationships.

While it can take time to find your feet in a new place, she reflects that it is important to be patient, stay present and listen to the locals. In doing so, ***“you will feel like it’s home in no time!”***

As a healthcare worker new to regional towns, Lakshmi has felt incredibly supported and amazed at how locals will go above and beyond to make you feel comfortable and welcomed.

On her days off, Lakshmi loves getting outdoors - cycling, rollerblading and hiking are all favourites. At home, she enjoys cooking and baking, relaxing with her cat or playing bridge competitively.

For Dr Sunderasan, the best part of rural life is the closeness to nature and the environment, which was a major drawcard for her.

Developing close and strong ties to the teams she works with makes it professionally and personally rewarding - where she could be working in community practice one day and across a range of acute hospital environments the next. All of which makes for a varied and interesting career.



“It’s also nice to really build relationships with your patients and community – it’s often a familiar face to walk through the GP or hospital doors”

Looking ahead, Dr Sunderasan hopes to work as a GP anaesthetist in regional South Australia and gain some experience in pre-hospital and retrieval work. She’s also interested in expedition medicine and working overseas, drawing on her background as a former biologist and marine biologist.

“Working in austere environments is my happy place!”

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Lastly, Dr Lakshmi Sunderasan has some great advice for trainees considering training in rural or a career as a Rural Generalist:

“If it’s something that has crossed your mind, do it! Go do some placements regionally and see if you like it.

Sometimes growing up and doing junior work in the city limits your perspective on what working as a doctor could be like. Medicine can be practiced in a vast number of ways, and you don’t truly know what’s out there until you experience it for yourself.”



“Also, every rural town is different so if you do have a term that isn’t positive, I’d recommend seeing more of the world and finding a place where you fit.”

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