

## Multidisciplinary rural training hubs—partnerships for sustainable rural training

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**Background:** The importance of primary care, and working as part of a primary care team, must be reinforced from the commencement of medical training and continued through training, with shifts in the current arrangements to enable interdisciplinary training. Jurisdictional barriers and a lack of flexibility in policy approach have led to an underutilisation of existing training networks, significantly impacting on rural workforce recruitment and retention.

**Objective:** To provide innovative and practical solutions to overcome barriers which currently limit training and workforce policy success.

**Approach:** The policy framework was formed during extensive consultation undertaken with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) rural membership, to identify the key issues, enablers and barriers to establishing streamlined medical education and training in rural and remote areas.

**Findings:** Investment in multi-disciplinary rural training hubs, in targeted locations, will address many of the current impediments to teaching and learning and create sustainable medical training communities by clustering funding and training effort. Reforms that include the use of locally available expertise and/or community partnerships, enabling tailored training relevant to the community setting, are needed.

The approach builds a strong teaching culture and facilitates a community connection for the learner, allowing for integrated and multidisciplinary team-based training to occur. The hubs are designed to enable a quality training experience, providing communities with the flexibility to design localised training solutions which:

- match their health care needs
- match their service construct, and
- accommodate the fluxes that occur over the duration of a doctor's career.

Strategically aligned partnerships at the regional level must be allowed to develop and not impeded by jurisdictional barriers where state and national policies intersect. This shift will provide the policy setting to establish the partnerships and infrastructure required to train across a broad scope to meet continuing comprehensive patient need.

**Discussion:** The integrated training hub model provides the supportive policy framework needed to facilitate medical and multidisciplinary training viability throughout rural Australia. This approach builds the connectedness and leadership required to facilitate a quality rural training experience, and instils a culture of teaching which supports workforce retention.