



15TH NATIONAL
RURAL HEALTH
CONFERENCE
Better together!

24-27 MARCH 2019
Hotel Grand Chancellor
Hobart, Tasmania



NATIONAL RURAL
HEALTH
ALLIANCE LTD

MEDIA RELEASE

25 February 2019

Supporting rural generalists in allied health professions

The vital work of remote and rural area health professionals is being supported through a “rural generalist” pathway that aims to address some of the known challenges for small allied health workforces delivering services to widely dispersed populations in rural and remote locations.

Rural health services have increasingly recognised that, to provide safe quality health care in rural and remote Australia, health professionals need to have a broad range of skills that better reflect the health needs of the local community.

For most health professionals practising in rural and particularly remote locations, the range of skills necessary extends beyond those that their specialist training has equipped them for. The concept of rural generalism and the development of rural generalist training pathways is intended to address this – to equip health practitioners with expanded practice skills to better meet the needs of rural communities.

Supporting the development of allied health professionals through education and training is one of three components of an AHRG Pathway that aims to address some of the challenges for small allied health workforce have when delivering services to widely dispersed populations in rural and remote locations.

The accreditation system for this education, developed by the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) on behalf of Queensland Health, will support health services and commissioning agencies implementing the Pathway.

The program will be highlighted in a presentation by AHHA Policy Director, Kylie Woolcock, at the 15th National Rural Health Conference in Hobart from 24 to 27 March 2019.

The proposal for a national Allied Health Rural Generalist (AHRG) Pathway has been advancing since 2013 through a cross-jurisdictional collaboration involving both state and commonwealth governments. Work has been more recently progressed in developing rural generalist training pathways for medicine led by the National Rural Health Commissioner, Professor Paul Worley.

The focus now has turned to the other health professions such as Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Dietetics, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Psychology and Social Work in particular.

Principal Sponsor



Royal Flying Doctor Service

ruralhealth.org.au/15nrhc



15TH NATIONAL
RURAL HEALTH
CONFERENCE
Better together!

24-27 MARCH 2019
Hotel Grand Chancellor
Hobart, Tasmania



NATIONAL RURAL
HEALTH
ALLIANCE LTD

Other components critical to the Pathway program are the use of service delivery strategies such as telehealth, delegation to allied health assistants, extended scope of practice and partnerships; as well as workforce and employment structures that support recruitment and retention.

Ms Woolcock said the program aimed to develop an individual's capability to respond to varied, familiar and unfamiliar circumstances in the rural and remote health service environment.

"Allied health professionals are integral to the delivery of high quality multi-professional services that address the health needs of rural and remote communities. Responding to the broad range of healthcare needs of these communities requires a strong reliance on teamwork, multi-disciplinary and inter-professional practice and a range of service delivery strategies," she said.

"This accreditation system has the primary purpose of supporting health services and commissioning agencies implementing the AHRG Pathway to identify education that meets organisational and community needs.

"When implemented, the accreditation system will assist health services and commissioning agencies to identify education programs that address the learning and development needs of early career allied health professionals in rural and remote communities.

"Implemented together with service delivery strategies appropriate to the setting and supportive workforce and employment structures, access to allied health services can be improved for rural communities."

If you are interested in attending the 15th National Rural Health Conference you can find more information, including the full conference program and registration details, by visiting the Conference website at www.ruralhealth.org.au/15nrhc

* * * * *

Contact: Allan Yates Director Communications and Media Liaison 0421 150 229

Principal Sponsor



Royal Flying Doctor Service

ruralhealth.org.au/15nrhc