

The challenge of providing fair care

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To set the scene for the theme of the conference I will describe some of the people and places in rural and remote areas. If we look at three of the biggest risk factors for poor health: joblessness, families with children living in poverty and school leavers not in higher education—they increase dramatically for the 30% of Australians who don't live in major cities. The result is decreasing life expectancy and increasing avoidable mortality outside of the main centres.

Rural practitioners are the key to improving health outcomes for people in rural and remote areas. Growing multimorbidity and complexity of care are increasing the demands on patients and practitioners in ways not addressed by traditional health care models and training.

The presentation will illustrate some of the principles and strategies that are making a difference and the possibilities for us as health professionals and community members to improve health outcomes.