

## Emerging issues in rural youth health: a practitioner's perspective

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In all of the policy discussion and confusion about health care reform, we sometimes forget that children's voices have to be heard as well as everybody else's. Children in rural and remote areas experience all of the extra difficulties and challenges of their parents, as well as the fact that advocates for them are few and far between. This makes the task of a rural paediatrician all the more important. As well as doing everything in our power to provide good paediatric services, we also need to highlight the place of children in a health system, which is characterised by constant change and 'to and fro' between state and Commonwealth governments. Children in rural South Australia living with a disability are just one example. Currently they are being served more or less effectively by a patchwork of local, state and national initiatives—and through the devotion of carers and clinicians. The National Disability Insurance Scheme is being rolled out to babies and children in South Australia and despite the best intentions in the world, considerable anxiety and uncertainty have been created for the kids themselves and their families and their clinicians. Transitioning to the new scheme is creating real challenges. In South Australia there is now the statewide health plan, *Transforming Health*, with a fair bit of extra uncertainty about what exactly it will mean for health services and staffing in rural and remote areas of the state. Children are our future and those who care for them do not intend to go away or give up!