

Are Queensland's new GP obstetricians going where they are needed?

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Aims: To report on a comparison of the workforce distribution of obstetric skilled graduates of the Queensland Rural Generalist Pathway (QRGP) and the birthing numbers in rural and remote Queensland

Methods, The graduate destination from the Queensland Rural Generalist Pathway in 2013 were mapped against Statistical Area Level 2 birth numbers and birth rates for 2013 and with District of Workforce Shortage as defined by the Australian Government. Analysis was performed to determine if the newly qualified rural generalist obstetricians (i.e. those who had completed 12 months of advanced specialised training in obstetrics) were commencing work where they were needed as determined by these parameters.

Relevance, The QRGP aims to provide medical graduates with a supported training pathway to a career in rural medicine; which in turn provides and rural and remote communities with a skilled medical workforce. It is important to evaluate whether this skilled medical workforce is working in the areas where there is greatest need for their skills.

Results Early indications are that newly qualified rural generalist obstetricians are working in areas of need with some regional variation

Conclusions: The QRGP is providing rural generalist obstetricians to areas of need. Further work is needed to refine incentives and supports to direct new rural generalist obstetricians to the areas where they are most needed.