PSA Rural Special Interest Group Member Report

**Author:** Lindy Swain, Director Rural Policy

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**Background**
PSA is the peak national professional pharmacy organisation representing Australia’s pharmacists working in all sectors and across all locations. The core business of PSA is practice improvement in pharmacy through the provision of continuing professional development and practice support. PSA provides an extensive program of education and professional development activities for pharmacists and intern pharmacists, and develops professional guidelines, standards and codes through its role as a standards-setting body for the profession.

PSA maintains its own Rural Special Interest Group (SIG) which provides a forum for PSA members to discuss issues of relevance and to develop appropriate policy and other solutions in order to achieve improved health outcomes for consumers together with sustainable models of pharmacy practice in rural, regional and remote Australia.

PSA Rural SIG members have participated in the Rural Pharmacists' Survey, the results of which will be used to inform debate on rural programs for Sixth Pharmacy Agreement (commences July 2015).

**Rural SIG**
- Rural SIG membership has grown to 669 (2012: 330)
- Rural SIG members receive a quarterly newsletter
- Rural SIG advisory committee meets biannually or as needed
• Collaboration with ARHEN, Rural Pharmacy Support Network, SARRAH, NACCHO
• Advocating for improvements to rural pharmacy programs in 6CPA
• Advocating for improvements in Aboriginal health – production of the “Guide for Providing Pharmacy Services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people”, Webinar training: Being a Culturally Responsive health professional
• Sponsorship of the rural plenary session at the Pharmacy Australia Congress
• Representative on QUMAX Reference Group
• Advocating for salaried pharmacist positions in Aboriginal Health Services
• Advocating for pharmacy to use the same rural classification system (GISCA-ASC) as other health professions, rather than PhARIA.
• Advocating for changes to HMRs rules to ensure that HMRs are viable in rural areas and that HMRs can be conducted in Aboriginal Health Services
• Advocating for more pharmacist positions in rural hospitals

PSA submissions relevant to rural issues have included:
• Response to 2014 competition policy review
• Inquiry into the National Health Amendment (Pharmaceutical Benefits) Bill 2014
• Standards for the accreditation of programs to support pharmacist administration of vaccines
• Submission to Federal Budget re supporting pharmacists in Aboriginal Health Services

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