

Monday 11 July 2022

16th National Rural Health Conference from 2-4 August 2022

'Bridging social distance; rural health innovating and collaborating'

In the lead up to the recent Federal election, the crisis in rural health received considerable media attention. It is well understood that the lack of sufficient health professionals and limited access to healthcare, result in lower life expectancy and higher levels of disease and injury in rural, regional and remote communities compared to metropolitan populations.

"If we are going to make significant inroads into improving access to affordable, high-quality healthcare, we need to bring together the whole rural health sector to learn from others about effective, innovative and tailored, place-based solutions for our rural communities," said Dr. Gabrielle O'Kane, CEO of the [National Rural Health Alliance \(the Alliance\)](https://www.ruralhealth.org.au).

To this end, the Alliance will host the [16th National Rural Health Conference](https://www.ruralhealth.org.au/16nrhc) from 2-4 August 2022 in Brisbane, Queensland.

The theme of this year's conference, 'Bridging social distance; rural health innovating and collaborating', provides an opportunity for over 600 like-minded health professionals, researchers and policy makers to participate in plenary and concurrent sessions showcasing innovative and collaborative research projects and programs that ultimately aim to improve health outcomes for rural communities.

"The Alliance is excited to present eminent speakers in the sector, such as well-known journalist and writer Stan Grant with his insights on indigenous affairs," Dr. O'Kane said.

Given the recent floods in South-East Queensland, delegates will also hear from the Director of the Institute for Climate, Energy and Disaster Solutions at ANU, Professor Mark Howden and the Climate and Health Alliance's Chief Executive Officer, Roland Sapsford, to learn about the ways in which health professionals and health services will need to alter their practices and infrastructure to mitigate, and adapt to, a changing climate.

There will also be keynote addresses from leading healthcare managers and an emergency care physician. A Senior Adviser to the Australian Government Department of Health, Associate Professor Susan Wearne, will draw on her experience with the Aboriginal Medical Service in Alice Springs.

"The Alliance is also pleased to have an address by Shanna Whan, Chief Executive Officer of Sober in the Country, 2022 Australia's Local Hero, who has committed herself to achieving social change in the bush, so that it's [OK2SAYNO](#) to alcohol. History-making humanitarian Rabia Siddique is sure to engage the delegates with presentations on leadership, resilience, equality and diversity," Dr. O'Kane added.

The Alliance invites all who are passionate about bridging the healthcare gap in Australia to [register](#) at the Conference to engage in an enriching experience. For registration and information, visit <https://www.ruralhealth.org.au/16nrhc/registration/> or call 02 6285 4660.

Ends.

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