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Media Release

New Board members at National Rural Health Alliance

The National Rural Health Alliance (the Alliance) will move into the new year with great vigour, with new Board members elected at the 32nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) this month.

Nicole O'Reilly, Head of School Health Sciences at Charles Darwin University and Jacqueline Emery, Chief Executive of Royal Far West were re-elected as Board Members. Penny Stewart OAM, Director of Alice Springs Intensive Care Unit and Dr Nicole Liesis, Clinical Lead Emergency at Narrogin Health Service were newly elected to the Board.

"I'm looking forward to the breadth of experience each Board member will bring to the table. I'm excited about the future of the Alliance and to work alongside people who have contributed so much to rural health.

"This is an exciting time for the Alliance as advocates for rural health care access and as we mark the end of yet another successful campaign – the National Rural Health Month," said the Alliance Chief Executive, Susanne (Susi) Tegen.

Nicole O'Reilly, re-elected as Chair of the Alliance, is based in Darwin, NT, and has held positions within the government, not-for-profit and higher education sectors, focusing on leadership, program development, change management and high-quality service provision. Jacqueline Emery, who has held strategic leadership roles for the last 20 years, is passionate about equitable access to health services to support country children's healthy development.

Penny Stewart OAM has contributed greatly to building a rural and remote workforce, supporting the College of Intensive Care to adopt mandatory training to see rural Intensive Care as a mechanism to secure the rural workforce. Dr Nicole Liesis is an experienced clinician with 30 years working in a wide variety of healthcare settings.

Heather Keighley, Board Member of Australian College of Nursing (Rural Nursing and Midwifery Faculty) and an academic at Flinders University NT on rural and remote health was re-elected as Deputy Chair. Katherine Isbister, Director of Bluewater Health Consultancy was elected as Treasurer.

The other Board Directors are Monica Barolits-McCabe, Executive Director, NACCHO; Geoff Argus, Director, Southern Queensland Rural Health and Frank Quinlan, Federation Executive Director, Royal Flying Doctor Service. The Board Directors will hold office until the AGM of 2025.

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