



PEAK RURAL HEALTH TRAINING BODIES WELCOME NEW MINISTERS

Australia's vital medical and multidisciplinary rural health peak bodies today welcomed the return of the Turnbull Government after the Federal election.

The Australian Rural Health Education Network (ARHEN) and the Federation of Rural Australian Medical Educators (FRAME) address the health workforce needs of nearly 7 million Australians living outside capital cities.

ARHEN (www.arhen.org.au) represents 12 University Departments of Rural Health (UDRHs) located in every state and the NT. UDRHs have been working for 16 years to expand the rural and remote health workforce through multidisciplinary education and training.

A key activity is provision of clinical placements for students in non-traditional locations. Research shows that positive experiences during these placements influences students' decisions about returning to work in these settings after graduation

Reflecting their continued success, funding for UDRHs was doubled in the Government's 2015 MYEFO. Three new multidisciplinary training sites were also announced.

FRAME (www.ausframe.org) represents 18 Rural Clinical and Regional Medical Schools and has worked for 13 years to support medical student training in rural and remote areas. It promotes integrated rural career pathways in medical education, training and research to ensure the health care needs of people in these locations are comprehensively addressed.

GPs, nurses and allied health professionals such as pharmacists, psychologists, dieticians, podiatrists, speech pathologists, physiotherapists, social workers and others are in short supply in rural and remote centres. Lack of access to these services then has a flow-on effect on the overall health status of people living rurally.

ARHEN and FRAME member organisations address workforce shortages by supporting access to high quality clinical placements in rural and remote centres throughout Australia. Accommodation and pastoral care is part of the program to ensure students have a stable, supported experience. Placements are offered for weeks, months or even a year at a time, exposing students to the diverse challenges and opportunities of professional practice and everyday life in these locations.

Together, ARHEN and FRAME represent 20 universities across Australia. Many have worked for more than 20 years to address rural health workforce issues. ARHEN and FRAME look forward to continuing to work cooperatively with the Government to build on the success of health training initiatives and support the wellbeing of Australia's rural population.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

15 July 2016

ARHEN: Board Chair, Prof Sabina Knight, 0417 823 933

FRAME: Prof Amanda Barnard, 0414 185 207