

The Rural Special Interest Group

The Rural Special Interest Group was formed in 2000 to represent the interests of psychiatrists living and working in rural and remote Australia and provincial areas of New Zealand. Although it is part of the RANZCP, membership of the group is not restricted to College Fellows. The group welcomes participation from anyone with an interest in rural psychiatry, including international doctors on working visas, policy makers and medical students.

Why a rural special interest group?

The prevalence of mental illness in rural areas is comparable to that in major cities. However, as with other medical specialties, there is a severe shortage of psychiatrists in rural Australia. The provincial areas of New Zealand experience similar difficulties.

The Rural Special Interest Group comprises psychiatrists and others from across Australia and New Zealand. Its aims are to:

- Promote and support the development of mental health services to rural, remote and provincial areas of Australia and New Zealand;
- Develop and promote initiatives to recruit and support psychiatrists working in rural, remote and provincial areas;
- Promote and support education and training in rural, remote and provincial mental health;
- Collate and disseminate information on rural, remote and provincial mental health;
- Promote and support research in rural, remote and provincial mental health.

The group's membership currently stands at roughly 170 members. It includes both psychiatrists living in rural areas and those who provide fly-out or telepsychiatry services from a metropolitan base, as well as a number of psychiatry registrars and international doctors.

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Committee members 2010/2011

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