

10 top reasons to support more rural placements for students

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Amy Stephenson, a fourth year nutrition and dietetics student at Flinders University and Teena Downton, a third year medical student from the University of Wollongong both share a strong interest in rural and remote health and have been heavily involved in their local Rural Health Clubs and the National Rural Health Students' Network (NRHSN). Amy and Teena this year hold roles on the NRHSN Council in the Community and Advocacy Portfolio.

Rural placements have an essential role in developing the passion and affinity of today's health students for rural and remote health. They provide valuable training environments and can also provide a wealth of meaningful experiences that will get more of them back to the bush when they graduate.

In this presentation, the student presenters will share their perspectives on some of the key reasons for there to be continued momentum for providing rural placement opportunities for all students across all health disciplines.

In addition to providing their perspective on current limitations of the Australian health system and where it falls short for those Australian's who live in rural and remote areas, many of which are well known to society, the presenters will also outline reasons why health students are the future solution to addressing the workforce shortages and inequities in rural health.

The NRHSN is a student body representing over 9,000 health students from 29 member Rural Health Clubs at universities across the country who passionate about improving health outcomes for rural and remote Australians.

This presentation will also include suggestions drawn from the experiences and perspectives of NRHSN members on how rural placements can be further enhanced to better prepare students with the skills and experiences they need for a future rural career, why co-placements of students make sense, and how the current health professionals can help support more students to be part of the rural health solution.