

University Departments of Rural Health

Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health

August 2007

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SARRAH recommends expansion of the UDRH program to cover all Remote and Rural Australia. UDRH resources should be enhanced with core funding for: allied health academics on staff, con-joint appointments of, academic/clinical staff, training of clinical supervisors, and support of Allied Health Clinical placements.

- **Accommodation infrastructure for allied health students**
- **Funding for Allied Health Academic Position - \$200,000 per University Department of Rural Health**

The University Departments of Rural Health (UDRH) program works with members of the rural and remote health workforce at both entry level and qualified practitioner level. The majority of the UDRH currently operating in Australia have a focus on primary health care, public health and multidisciplinary team practice. There is variation across the program with the degree of implementation of programs in support of the rural and remote allied health workforce, however, the basic principle remains.

The UDRH's are generally linked to a single university or university consortium / collaboration (e.g. WA). The delivery of programs within the UDRH for allied health workforce often relates to the history of the implementation of the UDRH and the school to which the UDRH is connected. This has resulted in some variation in implementation of allied health programs.

Program outcomes

The UDRH is required under the terms of its agreement with the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing to meet six key result areas (KRAs) and their attendant key performance indicators (KPIs).

Key Result Area 1

Increase and improve rural experiences for health science students.

Can be done through:

- Opportunity to practise clinical skills in a rural environment
- Opportunity to undertake a placement with specific outcomes relating to rural practice
- Encourage students to pursue a career in rural practice
- Support for student supervisors (education, training and mentoring – variable for allied health)

Key Result Area 2

Expand educational opportunities that are relevant for rural and remote practice.

Key Result Area 3

Undertake research and related activities in rural and remote health issues.

- Research program by academics employed within the UDRH staff
- Providing mentoring, education and training, in research skills for health professional workforce
- Providing infrastructure support (e.g. data analysis) to assist qualified health professional workforce members to undertake research relating to practice

Key Result Area 4

Support for rural health professionals, consumers, and communities.

For example:

- High quality support, education and training post graduation (e.g. access to training as a supervisor, research skills, multidisciplinary practice and inter-professional learning, health informatics, skills base)
- Providing link between local workforce and world class University

Key Result Area 5

Contribute to innovation in education, research and service development through collaborations with universities, health services and professional and community organisations.

Key Result Area 6

Embrace a strong population or public health focus, and contribute to the development of innovative service delivery models in rural and remote health.

Locations of UDRHs



- **NSW**
 - Department of Rural Health, Broken Hill (University of Sydney)

SARRAH Issues Paper

- Northern Rivers UDRH, Lismore (University of Sydney and Southern Cross University).
- UDRH Tamworth (University of Newcastle).
- **Qld**
 - Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health (James Cook University)
- **SA**
 - Spencer Gulf Rural Health School (incorporating the SA Centre for Rural & Remote Health (SACRRH) and the Adelaide University Rural Clinical School (AURCS)).
- **Tas**
 - University Department of Rural Health, Tasmania (University of Tasmania)
- **Vic**
 - University of Melbourne Department of Rural Health (Shepparton)
 - Greater Green Triangle UDRH, Warrnambool (Flinders and Deakin Universities).
 - Monash University School of Rural Health, Traralgon/Moe
- **WA**
 - Combined Universities Centre for Rural Health (University of Western Australia, Curtin University of Technology, Edith Cowan University)
- **NT**
 - Centre for Remote Health, Alice Springs (Flinders and Northern Territory Universities).