



UNIVERSITY *of*
TASMANIA

Monday 27 August 2018

Future doctors embark on rural health experience

The entire first-year University of Tasmania medical student cohort is going 'rural' in a bid to discover the health issues affecting communities outside the State's capital.

Today (**Monday, 27 August**), 119 aspiring doctors will depart Hobart for the North and North-West as they commence a Rural Week program.

The residential learning initiative is an annual event, allowing early-years medical students to explore various aspects of rural health.

The group will work in hospitals, learn about occupational health and safety on farms and practise first-response skills in a bush scenario.

Members of Tasmania's Aboriginal community will work with the students during on-country visits to Narawantapu National Park.

Dr Lizzi Shires, Director of the University's Rural Clinical School (RCS), said it was important for students to experience rural health early in their studies.

"Rural communities face different health challenges to their urban counterparts. Farm work has its own unique set of occupational risks. Rural people often suffer poorer health and have additional issues with distant health services," Dr Shires said.

"Rural Week allows our students to talk to patients and doctors in the rural areas and learn about these rural issues.

"We hope this opportunity allows students to see the many rewarding aspects of a rural placement and encourage them to join us at the RCS in Burnie or Launceston Clinical School in the later years."

Associate Professor Kim Rooney, Director of the Launceston Clinical School (LCS), said students would be working with their peers who are completing their fourth- and fifth-year of medicine in Burnie and Launceston.

“First-year Rural Week is a great chance for students to visit the LCS and RCS, meet the teaching team and hear the perspective of key community members,” Associate Professor Rooney said.

“Many first-year students will not have visited the North of the State before Rural Week, but in their fourth- and fifth-year more than half will be undertaking their training here or in the North-West.

“We want to introduce students to the opportunities for training in both regions, and also hope to emphasise the importance of understanding the community they will care for and serve.”

MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES:

NORTH

Monday, 27 August

11.30am – 3pm

Launceston Clinical School, Level 2, Northern Integrated Care Service, 41 Frankland Street, Launceston

Students will be hosted by Launceston-based fourth and fifth-year medical students who will act as guides and tutors. One group will be touring the LCS and practising skills relevant to their future careers as doctors. Using models, students will take fake blood and resuscitate plastic patients. They will also use specialised equipment to learn about human ears and body reflexes.

**The program will be repeated on Friday, 31 August.*

Northern media contacts:

A/Prof Jan Radford: 0419 885 285 (Monday)

Donna Campbell: 0437 277 640 (Friday)

NORTH-WEST

Tuesday, 28 August

9.30am – 12pm

Camp Clayton, 41 Clayton Road, Ulverstone

Students will be tasked with responding to multiple casualties during simulated wilderness emergency exercises. They will be challenged to exercise time-critical examinations, judgment and administer appropriate treatment and care in a location where limited medical resources are available, and without any prior briefings.

1pm – 5.30pm

Students will be participating in team building exercises which include a rescue activity, navigating a high ropes course and flying fox. The session is aimed at

teaching them the importance of cross-sector partnerships in rural health to achieve the best possible patient outcomes and care.

**Both programs will be repeated on Wednesday, 29 August and Thursday, 30 August.*

Wednesday, 29 August

6.45pm – 8pm

Camp Clayton, 41 Clayton Road, Ulverstone (main car park)

First Responders, Tasmania Ambulance representatives and the State Emergency Service will present a simulated emergency 'moulage' to students, in which they will respond to multiple casualties following a major car crash. The activity will include an extraction and rescue demonstration. Students will be challenged to support the treatment of injured occupants at the scene.

North-West media contacts:

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