Media Alert
Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Friday, 8 September 2017

Future doctors go rural to examine Tasmania’s health

First year medical students from the University of Tasmania will swap the capital city for regional areas next week, when they embark on a rural learning week.

Beginning on Monday, 11 September the 123 students will commence a Rural Week program, visiting locations across the North and North-West of the state to learn about health in rural communities.

The future doctors will tour regional hospitals, apply medical knowledge and skills in simulated emergency scenarios, and review occupational health and safety practices during local farm visits.

They will also learn about cultural aspects of health during trips to Narawntapu National Park, aimed at providing them with insight into Tasmania’s Aboriginal heritage and its importance for the health of local Aboriginal people.

Rural Clinical School Director Associate Professor Lizzi Shires said the Rural Week program was designed to provide first year students with rural insight, early in their medical journey.

“There are many rewarding aspects of working rurally and the program allows first year medical students to experience this while learning how health challenges in regional communities differ from those closer to major cities,” Associate Professor Shires said.

“Rural Week is about reinforcing the important partnerships between doctors and other health professionals which are crucial in providing the best patient care.

“It is an early opportunity for students to learn more about the north of the state and give them some idea about where they might like to complete their medical degree at the Launceston Clinical School, or Rural Clinical School in Burnie.”

Associate Professor Kim Rooney, Director of the Launceston Clinical School warmly welcomed the group.

“Rural week is a wonderful opportunity for first year medical students to see first-hand how health care is delivered in rural and regional Tasmania,” Associate Professor Rooney said.
“With the acknowledged need for all doctors to have generalist skills to address the complexity of our ever increasing chronic health care needs, the students will visit regional educational and training facilities that showcase our strengths in these areas.

“During their visits, practise clinicians, University academics, doctors in training, and current students, all keen to share their personal knowledge and experience, will mentor them.”

**MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES:**

**NORTH**

**Monday, 11 September**

11.30am – 3.30pm  
Launceston Clinical School, Level 2, Northern Integrated Care Service, 41 Frankland Street, Launceston

Students will get hands-on at simulated health stations challenging them to perform CPR, use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), practice venepuncture and cannulation, and use specialised equipment to learn about human ears and reflexes of the body.

*The program will be repeated on Friday, 15 September between 11am – 2.30pm.*

**NORTH-WEST**

**Tuesday, 12 September**

9.30am – 12pm  
Camp Clayton, 41 Clayton Road, Ulverstone

Students will respond to simulated remote wilderness emergency scenarios involving multiple casualties without any prior briefing. They will be challenged to exercise time-critical examination, judgment and administer appropriate treatment and care in a location where limited medical resources are available.

1.30pm – 5.30pm  
Camp Clayton, 41 Clayton Road, Ulverstone

Team building exercises will be coordinated for students teaching them the importance of cross-sector partnerships in rural health to achieve the best possible patient care. The students will partake in a team rescue activity and team challenge, while also navigating a high ropes course and gant swing.

*Both programs will be repeated on Wednesday 13, September and Thursday, 14 September.*

**Wednesday, 13 September**

6.45pm – 8pm  
Camp Clayton main car park, 41 Clayton Road, Ulverstone
A simulated emergency ‘moulage’ involving a major car crash with multiple casualties will be presented to the medical students by First Responders, Tasmanian Ambulance representatives and the State Emergency Service. The activity will include an extraction and rescue demonstration as students support the treatment of injured occupants at the scene.

**Information released by:**
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