



MEDIA RELEASE

Minister for Health and Ageing

Tony Abbott MHR

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More support for rural and remote medicine

The Commonwealth Government has committed new funding of \$1 million to the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) to develop an accredited training program for rural GPs.

This follows ACRRM's application to the Australian Medical Council (AMC) for formal recognition of rural and remote medicine as a medical specialty.

The AMC found that ACRRM's field of practice was similar to general practice, with the addition of a set of advanced skills, typically procedural and emergency skills.

The AMC found that ACRRM had contributed positively to the quality of training in Australia but the ACRRM application did not meet the criteria for recognition as a specialty. The government has accepted the AMC recommendation.

The government is confident that ACRRM has an important role providing educational and professional support for GPs in rural and remote Australia, and is worthy of assistance.

All other medical colleges have accredited training and examination programs. This funding will help ACRRM to develop its own accredited programs. Accreditation by AMC's Specialist Education Accreditation Committee (SEAC) is necessary before the government could consider formal recognition of ACRRM's Fellowship, in line with that of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

The Howard Government has boosted GP numbers in the bush by more than 20 per cent, increased Medicare rebates, boosted training numbers and provided incentives for rural and remote GPs who perform procedures such as obstetrics, surgery and anaesthetics. The government will continue to provide support to rural and remote GPs.

The AMC's findings can be viewed at

<http://www.amc.org.au/forms/Recognition/Final%20Rural%20&%20Remote%20Report%20pdf.pdf>

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