

'Most influential' health leaders to appear in key forum at major rural medicine conference

RMA Presidents' Breakfast
Friday 20 October 2017
Pullman Albert Park, Melbourne

Australia's most influential health leaders will discuss critical health policy issues in a key *Presidents' Breakfast* forum at the Rural Medicine Australia 2017 conference, to be held in Melbourne in October.

Dr Ewen McPhee, President of the Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA), will host the forum and will be joined on the panel by **Associate Professor Ruth Stewart**, President of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM); **Dr Bastian Seidel**, President of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP); and **Dr Tony Bartone**, Vice President of the Australian Medical Association (AMA).

The forum, which will be facilitated by well-known radio presenter and medical journalist, **Dr Norman Swan**, has been made possible with funding support from RDAA's major MDO Insurer Sponsor, MDA National.

Dr McPhee said that while the forum will cover a range of current health policy issues — including the maldistribution of doctors between urban and rural Australia — the main topic for discussion will be the implementation of a National Rural Generalist Pathway in Australia.

“The implementation of the Pathway is a priority task for the inaugural National Rural Health Commissioner once appointed.

“RDAA has been advocating for many years for a National Rural Generalist Pathway, and it is exciting that with the Federal Government's support it is close to becoming a reality,” Dr McPhee said.

“There has never been a more relevant time to discuss this critical development in rural health, and its importance in delivering to rural Australia the next generation of doctors with advanced skills in areas like obstetrics, anaesthetics, general surgery, emergency medicine, Indigenous health and advanced mental health.

“It is fantastic that we are able to feature the health leaders of Australia's two principal GP representative associations and two general practice colleges in our discussion about a National Rural Generalist Pathway, what it should entail and how it should be implemented.

“This is an exciting opportunity for conference delegates to hear from such an influential group of health leaders, and to participate in this interactive forum,” Dr McPhee said.

Rural Medicine Australia is the premiere annual rural medical conference in Australia, and is jointly hosted by RDAA and ACRRM.

The 2017 conference features the key themes of Sports Medicine, Climate Change, and Health and Research in Policy and Practice.

There are also pre-conference workshops and training in areas particularly relevant to rural medicine, such as Advanced Life Support, Rural Emergency Obstetrics and Rural Emergency Skills Training.

For more information, go to www.ruralmedicineaustralia.com.au.