

Student services and amenities fee

Position paper
June 2012

the future of rural health

National Rural Health Student Network

The National Rural Health Student Network (NRHSN) represents the future of rural health in Australia. It has more than 9,000 members who belong to 28 university Rural Health Clubs from all states and territories.

It is Australia's only multi-disciplinary student health network, bringing together people studying medicine, nursing and allied health, encouraging them to pursue rural health careers.

The NRHSN has two aims:

- ▶ to provide a voice for students who are interested in improving health outcomes for rural and remote Australians
- ▶ to promote rural health careers to students and encourage students who are interested in practising in rural health care.

The NRHSN and its Rural Health Clubs offer rural experience weekends, career information sessions and professional development activities as well as providing a social base for students at university and when on rural placement.

The student network leaders also advocate on behalf of health students of all disciplines - including opportunities for more rural placements and training support.

The NRHSN is managed by Rural Health Workforce Australia (RHWA) with funding from the Federal Department of Health.

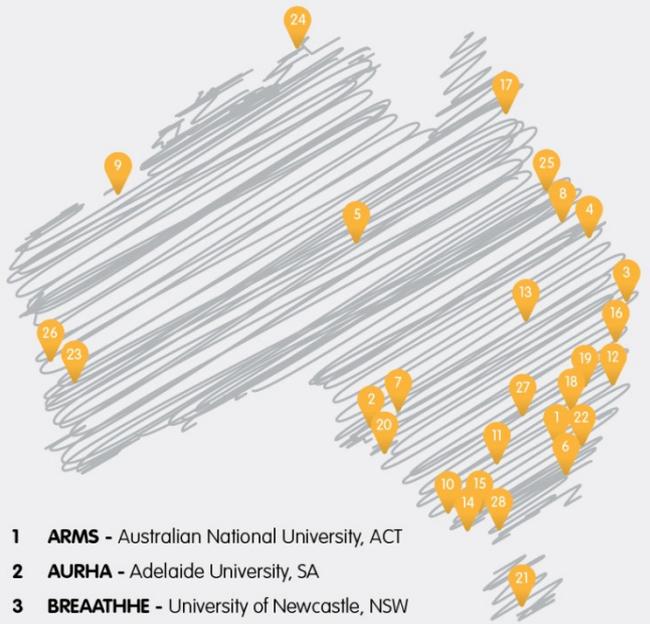
Rural Health Workforce Australia

Rural Health Workforce Australia is the national peak body for the seven state and territory Rural Workforce Agencies. Our not-for-profit Network is dedicated to making primary health care more accessible by attracting, recruiting and supporting health professionals needed in rural and remote communities. RHWA is also committed to the future workforce through our support of the National Rural Health Student Network.

Contact us

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Rural Health Clubs



- 1 **ARMS** - Australian National University, ACT
- 2 **AURHA** - Adelaide University, SA
- 3 **BREAATHHE** - University of Newcastle, NSW
- 4 **BUSHFIRE** - Bond University, QLD
- 5 **CARAH** - Charles Darwin University, NT in assoc with Flinders University, SA
- 6 **CRANC** - University of Canberra, ACT
- 7 **FURHS** - Flinders University, SA
- 8 **HOPE4HEALTH** - Griffith University, QLD
- 9 **KRASH** - Notre Dame University, Broome, WA
- 10 **LARHC** - La Trobe University, Bendigo, VIC
- 11 **MARHS** - Charles Sturt University, Albury, NSW including La Trobe University Wodonga campus
- 12 **MIRAGE** - University of Sydney, NSW
- 13 **NERCHA** - University of New England, NSW
- 14 **NOMAD** - Deakin University, VIC
- 15 **OUTLOOK** - University of Melbourne, VIC
- 16 **RAHMS** - University of New South Wales, NSW
- 17 **RHINO** - James Cook University, QLD
- 18 **RHUUWS** - University of Western Sydney, NSW
- 19 **ROUNDS** - Notre Dame University, Sydney campus, NSW
- 20 **ROUSTAH** - University of South Australia, SA
- 21 **RUSTICA** - University of Tasmania, TAS
- 22 **SHARP** - University of Wollongong, NSW
- 23 **SPINRPHFX** - Combined Universities of Western Australia, WA
- 24 **SIARRH** - Charles Darwin University, NT including Flinders University, SA
- 25 **TROHPIQ** - University of Queensland, QLD
- 26 **WAALHIIBE** - Combined Universities of Western Australia, WA
- 27 **WARRIAHS** - Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW
- 28 **WILDFIRE** - Monash University, VIC

Background

The Higher Education Legislation Amendment (Student Services and Amenities) Act 2011 (Cth) allows universities and other higher education providers to charge a Student Services and Amenities Fee for items of a non-academic nature. The revenue from the fee may be spent by higher education providers on items such as clubs and societies, sporting and recreational activities, employment and career advice, child care, financial advice and food services.

Further information can be found at:

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Programs/StudentSupport/StudentServicesandAmenities/Pages/Home.aspx#revenue>

Under the Australian Government's Rural Clinical Training and Support Program, at least 25% of medical students enrolled on Commonwealth-supported places must undertake a minimum of one year of their clinical training in a rural area. Some students will spend up to four years at rural clinical sites and may not attend their university's main campus during this time.

Students who are undertaking clinical training through a Rural Clinical School or University Department of Rural Health ('Rural Clinical Students') may have very limited access to services and amenities funded by the SSAF revenue, because they:

- a) Spend very little, if any, time on the main campuses of their university;
- b) Have a high number of clinical contact hours per week; and
- c) Have a high number of clinical teaching weeks per year.

Recommendations

- ▶ **Recommendation 1:** In the interests of fairness and equity, all students who are charged the Student Services and Amenities Fee ("SSAF") are entitled to an equal opportunity to benefit from the SSAF revenue.
- ▶ **Recommendation 2:** Application of the SSAF would be considered fair where the amount charged is proportional to the services and amenities received, or at the very least, genuinely accessible to students.
- ▶ **Recommendation 3:** Have a formal process of consultation with representatives from student organisations regarding the specific uses of the SSAF revenue.
- ▶ **Recommendation 4:** Exempt Rural Clinical Students from payment of the full SSAF; and/or
- ▶ **Recommendation 5:** Make opportunities available for student organisations and/or Rural Clinical Schools and University Departments of Rural Health to apply for direct funding from the SSAF to provide services to Rural Clinical Students.