

## Rural Clinical Placements: School of Rural Health Policy

### Purpose

To maximise medical workforce outcomes of the rural clinical placement program and provide equity for graduate entry and direct entry students in relation to short-term and long-term rural placements. To identify students to form part of the Gippsland Rural Cohort (GRC) to undertake long-term rural placements of up to two years in rural South East Victoria and to provide opportunity for all rural origin and non-rural origin Commonwealth supported students, with an expressed and demonstrated interest in future rural practice, to undertake long-term rural placements.

### Scope

- School of Rural Health staff
- Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences staff
- All students (apart from the Extended Rural Cohort)
- Key stakeholders of the School of Rural Health, Monash University

### Policy Statement

The School of Rural Health will ensure that:

- The process of allocating students to short-term and long-term placements in rural Victoria is transparent and provides equity for all direct entry and graduate entry students.
- Rural Victoria provides rural clinical placements across the following SRH teaching units:
  - SRH Mildura
  - SRH Bendigo
  - SRH East and South Gippsland
  - SRH Latrobe Valley and West Gippsland
- The North West and South East regions of the School of Rural Health operate as analogous programs so that students undertake short-term and long-term rural clinical placements via the Extended Rural Cohort (ERC) and the Gippsland Rural Cohort (GRC). Allocation to a long-term rural clinical placement in the North West or South East region will preferably be for 2 years (as is currently the case in the North West via the ERC).
- Students can opt to form part of the Gippsland Rural Cohort (GRC) during the submission of preferences in Year 2A. They will be asked if they wish to spend up to two years in the South East region. Students who opt for a two year South East placement will be supported by the School of Rural Health as a Gippsland Rural Cohort student across Years 3B and 4C, ie. should students preference the same region/site for Year 4C, they will receive preference over other students to be allocated to that region/site. This is dependent on available places after approved special requirements have been allocated.
- The policy allows the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences to meet its objectives to:
  - balance student placement allocations with available placements and adequate clinical supervision at each rural location; and
  - exceed the required targets set for the University by the Australian Government in order to address the recognised rural medical workforce shortage and the disproportionate workforce shortage burden carried by regional/rural areas.

- The Faculty endeavours to meet an individual student's higher preference; however, this is not guaranteed. Students may be allocated to lower preferences, particularly in the Faculty's attempts to address rural medical workforce issues.
- The Faculty works closely with the School of Rural Health in order to produce the best outcome to address recognised rural workforce needs in each region.

### Supporting Procedures

Rural Clinical Placements: School of Rural Health Procedures

### Supporting Guidelines

AMA Regional/Rural Workforce Initiatives – 2012

### Responsibility for Implementation

All staff and key stakeholders of Monash University

### Status

Revised July 2015

### Key Stakeholders

All staff from Monash University

All students (apart from the Extended Rural Cohort)

### Approval Body

School of Rural Health Executive Committee

### Endorsement Body

- Rural MBBS Directors Committee
- School of Rural Health Executive Committee
- Clinical Years Management Committee (CYMC)
- Medicine Course Management Committee (MCMC)

### Related Policies

- Australian Government Rural Health Enhancement Policy
- Student Accommodation: School of Rural Health Policy

### Date Effective

2012

### Review Date

June 2016

### Owner

Head of School, School of Rural Health, Monash University

### Policy Author

Manager, Rural Education Program, School of Rural Health

### Content Enquiries

Manager, Rural Education Program, School of Rural Health

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Version No.	Date Approved	Approved By	Brief Description
1.0	14 March 2012	SRH Executive Committee	Approved by SRH Executive Committee 14/03/2012. Endorsed by MCMC 31/05/2012.
1.1	7 October 2013	Manager, Rural Health Education Program	Dates adjusted for 2014. Minor amendment re GRC wording.
1.2	30 January 2014	Manager, Rural Health Education Program	Draft revision 30/01/2014. To be discussed at GHEM Steering Committee meeting 04/02/2014.
1.3	21 February 2014	Manager, Rural Health Education Program	Draft revision following discussion at GHEM Steering Committee meeting on 04/02/2014. For endorsement at Rural MBBS Directors Committee 19/03/2014.
1.4	19 March 2014	Rural MBBS Directors Committee	Inclusion of GRC option. Endorsed by Rural MBBS Directors Committee 19/03/2014.
1.5	24 April 2014	Manager, Rural Health Education Program	Minor amendments to Procedures following discussion with Director NVRMEN Program. Final endorsement at SRH Executive Committee on 29/04/2014.
1.6	29 April 2014	SRH Executive Committee	Minor amendments endorsed by SRH Executive Committee 29/04/2014. Submit to CYMC meeting 05/05/2014 for information.
1.7	11 June 2014	Manager, Rural Health Education Program	Correction to nomenclature. Submit to MCMC meeting 26/06/2014 for information.
1.8	17 April 2015	Manager, Rural Health Education Program	For further review June 2016
1.9	7 July 2015	Manager, Rural Health Education Program	Adjustments regarding GRC. Endorsed by Rural MBBS Directors 21 July 2015.

## Rural Clinical Placements: School of Rural Health Procedures

### Title of Parent Policy

Rural Clinical Placements: School of Rural Health Policy

### Procedures

#### Commonwealth Requirements

Monash University is subject to various government requirements. Currently, a minimum of 25% of local Commonwealth supported student admissions to the Monash course must be students of rural origin, as defined in the Monash Rural Student Entry Scheme. The School draws on the position statement developed by the AMA (April 2012) on regional and rural workforce initiatives, the importance of improving the medical workforce supply in regional and rural Australia and the identification of medical workforce shortage as a major health issue. The AMA has recognised that the overall distribution of doctors is skewed heavily towards the major cities, such that regional, rural and remote areas are shouldering a disproportionate workforce shortage burden.

The North West and South East regions of the School of Rural Health operate as analogous programs in that students undertake long-term rural clinical placements via the Extended Rural Cohort (ERC) and the Gippsland Rural Cohort (GRC). Allocation to a long-term rural clinical placement in the North West or South East region will preferably be for two years (as is currently the case in the North West via the ERC).

Regarding rural clinical placements whilst undertaking Monash MBBS studies:

- A minimum proportion (currently 25%) of local Commonwealth supported, Monash University medical students must undertake a minimum of 12 months of their clinical learning in a rural environment throughout their medical course.
- In addition, all CSP medical students must undertake at least four (4) weeks structured rural placement in an ASGC-RA 2-5 region.
- CSP students who do not undertake a Year 2 short-term rural placement and/or a long-term rural placement in Years 3B or 4C will be required to undertake a rural placement in Year 5D in order to meet the four week RCTS requirement.

#### Year 2 Rural Placement Program / Prevention Science Program

- Parallel to the Year 2 rural placement program, which introduces students to practising medicine within a rural context, a two week prevention science program managed by the School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine is offered to all Year 2 students.
- The program maintains a similar working set of learning outcomes and assessment tasks with the outcome being to broaden students' knowledge of disease prevention enabling them to include this as part of their approach in their medical career.

- Allocation in Year 2 to either the rural placement program or prevention science program will be undertaken in consultation between the School of Rural Health, MBBS Administration and the School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine.

#### **Awareness and acceptance of the policy**

- The Faculty and the School of Rural Health have a responsibility to ensure that all students are aware of the allocation policy prior to students submitting online preferences via the central Online Placements System (OPS).
- The number and composition of placements available at each rural location is determined by the Faculty in consultation with the School of Rural Health based upon factors such as teaching resources and availability of placements with adequate clinical supervision across a range of regional and rural settings. This may vary from year to year.
- The process of allocating students to rural short-term placements in Year 2 and long-term placements in Years 3B and 4C will be managed by the SRH Rural Education Program office in consultation with MBBS Administration, and (in the case of Year 2) the School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine.
- Decisions regarding the allocation of students to short-term and long-term rural placements are the joint responsibility of the School of Rural Health and the Faculty; students have a responsibility to accept and abide by these decisions.
- In accepting a short-term or long-term rural placement, students accept that they may be required to undertake a placement at a location or locations other than their first, second, third or fourth preference. All CSP MBBS students will already be aware that they may be required to undertake a minimum of 12 months of their clinical learning in a rural environment throughout their MBBS course.

#### **Student participation in allocation decisions**

- Each student in Year 2 will have the option of submitting preferences for either the rural placement program or prevention science program.
- Each student will be given the opportunity to indicate his/her preferences for allocation to particular rural locations by submission of placement preferences via the central Online Placements System (OPS), administered by the SRH.
- It will be assumed that a student has no particular preferences if he/she does not submit online preferences via the central OPS.
- The School of Rural Health, in consultation with MBBS Administration, will provide students with up to date information about teaching/supervisory environments across Years 2/A – 5D to assist students in submitting rural placement preferences.
- A student who provides false or misleading information, especially about his/her residential address or other extenuating circumstances, will have their preferences disregarded.

#### **Short-term and long-term rural placement allocation decisions**

The following factors will be considered in relation to short-term and long-term rural placement allocation decisions:

- Number of available placements at individual locations.
- Adequate clinical supervision for placements across regional and rural/remote locations.

- Student preferences as indicated via online preferences submitted via OPS.
- The importance of meeting future rural workforce needs in each region and enabling rural origin and non-rural origin CSP students considering a career in rural medicine to access short-term and long-term rural clinical placements.
- Whether or not the student is a local Commonwealth supported student.
- Special requirements, details of which must be indicated and submitted in writing at the same time or prior to online preferences being submitted. Applications received after the online preference system has closed will not be considered.

Special requirements include (in respect of the student):

- Major health problem(s) requiring frequent and ongoing specialised treatment which is only available in certain locations.
- Being a parent of a dependent child or children.
- Involvement in sport as part of the Monash University Elite Athlete Support Program.
- Being a primary or secondary carer for a dependent.

Examples of circumstances concerning the student that are **not** classed as special requirements:

- Lack of access to a motor vehicle or inability to drive.
- Other transportation issues.
- Relationship without dependents.
- Religious grounds.
- Ownership or rental of accommodation.
- Other accommodation issues.
- Employment.
- Financial issues.

### **Long-term rural clinical placements for MBBS students**

As stated under *Commonwealth Requirements*, the Australian Government has a Rural Health Enhancement Policy that currently requires a minimum of 25% of local Commonwealth supported Monash University medical students to undertake a minimum of twelve (12) months of their clinical learning in structured rural clinical environments. The format and structure of the School of Rural Health's long-term rural clinical placement program is determined by the Faculty in close consultation with the School.

Unless otherwise stated, the following only apply to local Commonwealth supported students:

1. Allocation to Year 2 short-term and Year 3B and 4C long-term rural placements will be made by the School of Rural Health after students have indicated their preference for a rural placement in these years via a central process.
2. Students who are considering undertaking a long-term rural placement are encouraged to actively engage with the School of Rural Health as early as possible in their medical course, demonstrating their interest in taking up a long-term rural placement as well as discussing career aspirations to practice in a regional/rural setting.

3. Applications for special requirements in relation to long term rural placements will be considered by a joint committee comprising School of Rural Health and Faculty MBBS members. This will occur prior to rural students submitting preferences for rural sites.
4. Students who have selected the School of Rural Health in Years 2, 3B and 4C will be asked to submit preferences via the Rural Education Program office for allocation to rural sites in consultation with SRH sites.
5. Students can opt to form part of the Gippsland Rural Cohort (GRC) during submission of preferences in Year 2/A. They will be asked if they wish to spend up to two years in the South East (SE) region. Students who opt for a two year South East placement will be supported by the School of Rural Health as a Gippsland Rural Cohort student across Years 3B and 4C, ie. should students preference the same SE region/site for two consecutive years, they will receive preference over other students requesting only one year at that region/site. This is dependent on available places after approved special requirements have been allocated. This will apply when allocating students to 4C rural placements.
6. Selection of students into the GRC will be during Year 2/A with the numbers of places in Years 3B and 4C determined by availability of clinical training opportunities.
7. Students will be asked to submit preferences by site via a preference process managed by the SRH Rural Education Program office in consultation with SRH teaching sites.
8. Allocation to a long-term rural placement in either the North West or South East region may be for one or two years (if specifically requested); however preference will be given to those students requesting a two year rural placement.
9. If non-ERC students preference the same North West (NW) region/site for two consecutive years, they will receive preference over other students requesting only one year at that region/site. This is dependent on available places after approved special requirements have been allocated. This will apply when allocation students to 4C rural placements.
10. International students may apply for a long-term rural placement as part of their clinical training. However, to achieve government imposed targets of Commonwealth supported students per cohort undertaking long-term rural placements, the Faculty is required to allocate local Commonwealth supported students to a long-term rural placement prior to considering applications from international students.
11. If metropolitan sites are oversubscribed, a transparent process will exist for allocation to rural sites. This process will be agreed to by the SRH and Faculty MBBS and will have been communicated to students prior to submission of preferences.
12. If rural sites are oversubscribed, a transparent process will exist for allocation to metropolitan sites. This process will be agreed to by the SRH and Faculty MBBS and will have been communicated to students prior to submission of preferences.
13. Extended Rural Cohort (ERC) students are allocated to the North West region by the SRH Rural Education Program office in consultation with SRH Mildura and SRH Bendigo.
14. Identified Gippsland Rural Cohort (GRC) and non-Gippsland Rural Cohort students are allocated to the South East region by the SRH Rural Education Program office in consultation with SRH Latrobe Valley & West Gippsland and SRH East & South Gippsland.
15. The School of Rural Health reserves the right to allocate / re-allocate any MBBS student to a long-term rural placement based on perceived academic and/or pastoral needs, and Faculty education program needs.

### **Accommodation**

The *Student Accommodation: School of Rural Health Policy* notes the following regarding accommodation. The School of Rural Health will ensure that student access to all rural sites will include:

- equity for all MBBS graduate entry and direct entry students across all North West and South East teaching sites.
- equity for all Monash University Nursing and Allied Health students requiring School of Rural Health accommodation;
- equity in relation to access to student housing for all non-Monash University students requiring short-term SRH accommodation;
- student accommodation income and expenditure which is sustainable across all sites;
- an environmental footprint which is guided by the Monash University Environmental Policy; and;
- University Department of Rural Health student accommodation reporting requirements.

### **Insurance**

Monash University's insurance policies do not cover the personal effects of students residing in University-provided accommodation.

### **Responsibility**

All staff and key stakeholders of Monash University, School of Rural Health

### **Status**

Revised July 2015

### **Content Enquiries**

Manager, Rural Education Program, School of Rural Health – Office of Head of School  
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