



Friday 3 July 2020

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## ACRRM welcomes the appointment of Associate Professor Ruth Stewart as National Rural Health Commissioner

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The appointment of Associate Professor Ruth Stewart as the National Rural Health Commissioner will keep the implementation of the National Rural Generalist Pathway (NRGP) on track and ensure all rural and remote Australians have access to the healthcare they deserve, says the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM).

Minister for Health Greg Hunt and Minister for Rural Health Mark Coulton today announced Associate Professor Stewart's appointment would take a broader focus with the Office of the National Rural Health Commissioner to include two Deputy Commissioner roles covering allied health, nursing and Indigenous health.

ACRRM President Dr Ewen McPhee says the appointment of Associate Professor Stewart demonstrates the government is serious about the future of our rural and remote communities.

"We commend the Ministers on selecting someone who is clearly passionate, informed and proactive, and we are confident they have chosen the best person for the job," Dr McPhee says.

"Associate Professor Stewart has intricate knowledge of the role, as ACRRM President when the inaugural Commissioner Professor Paul Worley was appointed.

"Her depth of knowledge, enthusiasm for women's health, and her commitment to Aboriginal and Torres strait affairs throughout her 30-year career in rural generalism ensures she will continue the excellent work Professor Worley has achieved to secure the future of the NRGPs and takes it to the next step.

"There is still plenty to do to, and with her tenacity and drive I am confident it will get done."

"The first task assigned to the Commissioner is to support the Government's rural response to COVID-19 and to investigate its impact on health workforce planning in regional, rural and remote communities.

"Another task will be to oversee exploration of a model of care that is suitable for rural and remote communities," Dr McPhee says.

"We are excited to be working in partnership with Office of the National Rural Health Commissioner towards formal recognition of rural generalism and to building a strong and sustainable Rural Generalist workforce delivering quality care in rural and remote communities. "

**ENDS**



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For interviews with ACRRM President Dr Ewen McPhee, please contact Marketing and Communications Manager Petrina Smith by phoning 0414 820 847 or emailing [p.smith@acrrm.org.au](mailto:p.smith@acrrm.org.au),

## **ABOUT ACRRM**

The [Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine](#) is the only College in Australia entirely dedicated to training and supporting rural General Practitioners and Rural Generalists to serve rural and remote communities.

The College vision is to have the right doctors, in the right places, with the right skills, providing rural and remote people with excellent health care.

For information on rural generalism, please [click here](#)

For more information on the College, [visit acrrm.org.au](http://acrrm.org.au).