



Sunday 26 January 2020

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## ACRRM CEO recognised for significant service to rural and remote healthcare

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Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) Chief Executive Officer Dr Marita Cowie has been appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia (General Division) for significant service to community health in rural and remote areas.

Dr Cowie is the founding CEO of ACRRM and the longest serving CEO of any Australian specialist college. Her dedicated sustained contribution to the College's success and to the lives of people living in rural and remote communities has not wavered in the 22 years she has led the organisation.

From the early days following the 1996 national plebiscite of rural doctors that led to ACRRM's establishment, to the development of a world-first rural doctor curriculum, her work has deeply shaped the agenda for the College and rural medicine in Australia. Dr Cowie has played a significant role in the recognition and accreditation of College programs, the shaping of national policy to deliver vital government support for rural medical practice, and the pioneering use of information technology for learning and continuing professional development.

Under her guidance, the College led the international development of a landmark definition of Rural Generalist medicine, known as the Cairns Consensus Statement on Rural Generalist Medicine, and saw ACRRM be the lead College for the highly successful Queensland Rural Generalist Program.

In response to the Australia Day announcement, Dr Cowie says: "It is a real privilege to be honoured for something I feel so passionate about. "It's also important recognition of the amazing efforts and achievements of the many wonderful people I've been fortunate to work with, most notably my team and members at ACRRM".

Dr Cowie's career has focused on servicing the needs of rural communities since the beginning. Early roles included Policy Officer with the United Graziers Association of Queensland, the National Manager of the Directorate of Rural Education for the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and establishing one of the country's first bridging programs to assist international medical graduates to achieve registration in Australia. Among Dr Cowie's contributions to public life are her work as the first female President of the Asthma Foundation of Queensland.

Dr Cowie received a Distinguished Service Medal from the Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) in 2007 and became an Honorary member of the College in 2009.

In December 2018 she received an Honorary Doctor of Medicine, awarded by James Cook University, for her exceptional contribution to the field of medicine in the north Queensland and regional and rural communities worldwide.

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For interviews or further information, please contact marketing and brand manager Petrina Smith at [p.smith@acrrm.org.au](mailto:p.smith@acrrm.org.au), 0414820 847 or 1800 223 226.



## **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 to serve rural and remote communities.

For more information, [visit acrrm.org.au](https://www.acrrm.org.au).