

September 2017

Newsletter for RAMUS Scholars, Mentors and Alumnus

From the RAMUS Team

Welcome to the September 2017 issue of the RAMUS Newsletter.

In this issue, you will find extracts from Annual Mentor reports, results from the RAMUS tracking project and details on the latest issue of the Australian Journal of Rural Health.

We welcome contributions for the newsletter – articles, photos or suggestions – for a future newsletter.

Best wishes

*The RAMUS Team
Lesley and Janine*

End of Year RAMUS acquittal

RAMUS will be emailing scholars end of year acquittal requirements in October. If you think your email address could be out of date, please contact the RAMUS team and we will happily update it.

Queen's Birthday Honours

Current and previous RAMUS mentors received 2017 Order of Australia awards earlier in the year.

Current Mentor Dr Timothy Mooney has been honoured for significant service to medicine through a range of multiple practice roles, to doctors in rural and remote areas, and to the community in George Town, TAS.

Congratulations to previous RAMUS Mentors Dr John Geoffrey Moran from Murwillumbah NSW, Dr Scott Giltrap from Albury NSW, Dr John Kramer from Woolgoolga and Dr John McLaren from Cowra NSW.

Extracts from Mentor reports

An important feature of the RAMUS Scheme is that all scholarship holders are required to have a rural doctor as a mentor.

For many RAMUS scholars the mentoring component of RAMUS is the highlight of their scholarship. Various scholars have described their mentor as 'an inspirational doctor', 'an example of what I might become in the future' and 'a professional role model'.

At the conclusion of the year, each Mentor is asked to provide a report on their scholar. It is at this point that Mentors can evaluate the communication they have had from their scholar and how engaged the scholar has been.

Below are some of the nice comments we received in the 2016 Mentor reports.

"It has been an absolutely pleasure mentoring and I wish her all the best for the future."

"It has been a valuable and rewarding experience mentoring my scholar to the completion of his studies. I know I will continue the relationship as he travels through his intern and Junior Medical Officer years."

"My mentee has been an enthusiastic scholar and I have enjoyed watching him succeed. I wish him all the best in his future, and will watch his career with interest."

"My scholar has completed his degree with a clear pathway to rural practice – he commences an intern position in a rural setting in 2017. I believe his RAMUS experience has been a significant element in selection of career path and I wish him every success."

"Excellent mentee, very interested in all aspects of medicine and of rural health."

"The mentee has been very committed to his studies. It has been a delight to oversee his progress in becoming a doctor. I am pleased he has dedicated some time to undertake rural activities, and it was a delight to attend his graduation party at his house in rural NSW."

RAMUS tracking project

Earlier in 2017, the RAMUS team undertook a tracking project of all completed RAMUS scholars. The first round of results was presented at the 14th National Rural Health Conference, held in Cairns in April 2017.

The project looked at each former scholarship holder's address at the age of 5, the University attended and place of practice. This information was obtained from the Australian Health Practitioner Registration Authority (AHPRA) website (<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/>).

As of 2016, 2043 students had graduated their studies and the RAMUS scheme. We were able to locate the home address, University attended and practice address of 1741 former scholarship holders.

The project has used the Australian Standard Geographical Classification system (ASGC-RA) to map the locations of former scholars home and current practice address.

The 302 former scholarship holders not included in the study are those that we could not find due to name changes, those that are practising internationally or those that are not registered in AHPRA as a medical professional.

We found that 47% of former scholarship holders came from an Inner regional area, 32% from an Outer regional area, 7% from a Remote area and 2% from a Very remote area. 12% of former scholarship holders had an address at age 5 in a Metro area (they were still able to meet the rurality criteria before starting study if they moved soon after turning 5).

Monash University, James Cook University and the University of New South Wales were the top three Universities with the majority of RAMUS scholars attending. The Universities located in regional settings had larger percentages of former scholarship holders practicing in Inner regional to Very remote areas.

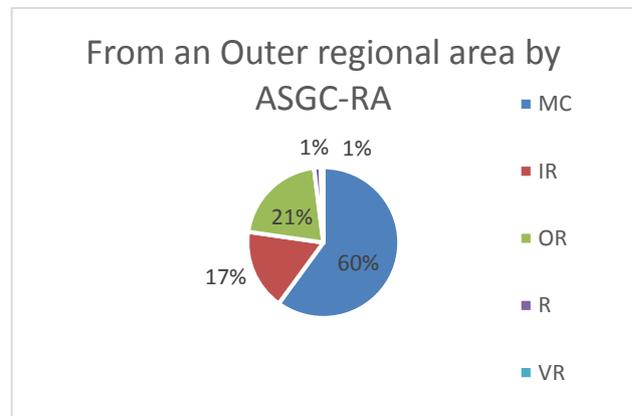
Where former scholars are now reveals that the majority are registered in a Metro area. 66% of former RAMUS scholarship holders are in a Metro area, 19% in an Inner regional area, 12% in an Outer regional area, 2% in a Remote area and 1% are in a Very remote area.

Of the 1,741 past RAMUS scholars included in the study, 608 (35%) are currently practising in a rural, regional or remote (ASGC- RA 2-5) area.

- 608 (35% of 1,741) scholars are working in rural and remote Australian areas;
 - 139 working as General Practitioners, with 80 (58%) of these practising in a rural or remote Australian area.
 - 261 are working as Specialists, with 58 (22%) of these working in a rural, regional or remote area.
- 373 (21%) are provisionally registered, with 146 (39%) of these working in a rural, regional or remote area.
- 968 (56%) are practising in Australia under a General registration, with 324 (33%) of these working in a rural, regional or remote area.

60 former scholars are practising or training in the same postcode as their home address.

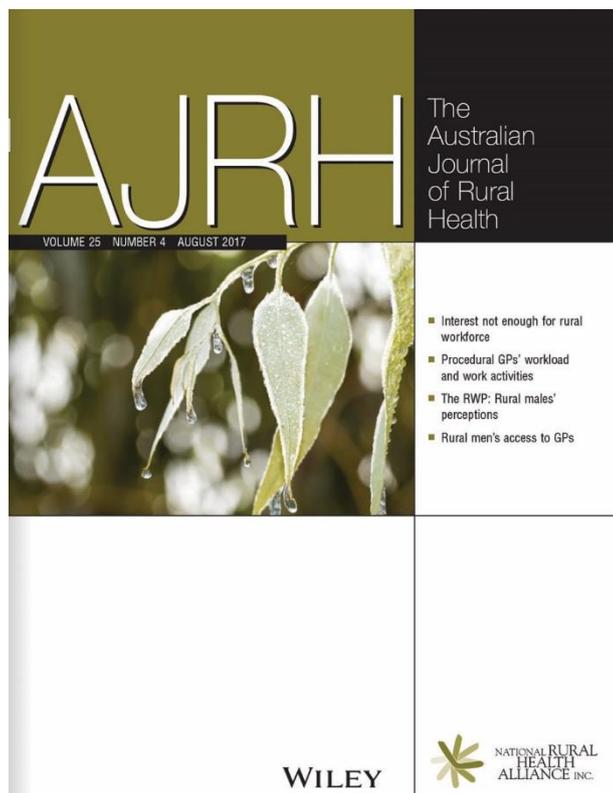
Have former RAMUS scholarship holders returned to the bush?



As an example, the image above shows that 40% of former scholarship holders that lived in an Outer regional area at the age of 5 have returned to practice in rural or remote area.

More results from the tracking project will be on the RAMUS website by the end of September 2017.

<http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/map>



RAMUS scholars have free online access to the Australian Journal of Rural Health (AJRH). Access is through the RAMUS website:

<http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/ajrh>

The August 2017 issue of AJRH is now available online. Contents include:

- Ice and the outback: Patterns and prevalence of methamphetamine use in rural Australia
- Interest in rural clinical school is not enough: Participation is necessary to predict an ultimate rural practice location
- How does the workload and work activities of procedural GP's compare to non-procedural GP's
- Rethinking registrar attributes for Australia rural general practice training
- Cross-sectional study of emergency department presentation triage categories at Goondiwindi

Hospital and their effect on the treatment of acute emergencies

- Addressing engagement, anger and aggression through the Rock Water Program: Rural adolescent males' perception
- Doing it hard in the bush: Aligning what gets measured with what matters
- Older men's experiences of accessing general practitioner services in rural areas
- The rural and remote health workforce of the future

Don't forget you don't have to wait for the most recent articles. AJRH now offers [Early View](#) – online access to the latest papers accepted for publication. Recent topics include:

- [Towards good dementia care: Awareness and uptake of an online Dementia Pathways tool for rural and regional primary health practitioners](#)
- [Rural health service managers' perspectives on preparing rural health services for climate change](#)
- [Breastfeeding beyond the big smoke: Who provides support for mothers in rural Western Australia?](#)
- [Health professional students' rural placement satisfaction and rural practice intentions: A national cross-sectional survey](#)
- [Health and environmental impacts of a regional Australian Men's Shed program](#)

RAMUS is on Facebook

Stay up to date with RAMUS news, ask RAMUS a question or communicate with other RAMUS scholars, mentors and alumni.



To join the RAMUS Facebook group, go to:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/348490061904468/>

Note: this is a closed Facebook group, exclusively for RAMUS scholars, mentors and alumni.