

MEDIA ALERT

Doorstop interview – Canberra

Funding for rural health training and education

CANBERRA, 18 June 2013 - Australia's peak multidisciplinary rural health education body will meet with MPs in Canberra today in a bid to secure funding for more student nurses, dentists and allied health workers to train in and for rural and remote Australia.

The Australian Rural Health Education Network (ARHEN) lobbied MPs for a pre-election funding commitment to key priorities which aim to enhance and increase the health workforce in the bush, building on significant gains made in the last 10 years.

ARHEN's member University Departments of Rural Health have delivered significant infrastructure across Australia and high quality clinical training in authentic rural and remote practice settings.

Over the past five years, almost 22,000 students have been placed for more than 98,000 placement weeks. This will continue to be built on, with the emerging evidence of the effectiveness of regional programs which engage locally.

MPs present at the meeting included Federal Minister for Health **Tanya Plibersek**, Shadow Health Minister **Peter Dutton**, Shadow Minister for Universities and Research **Brett Mason** and Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Health Services and Indigenous Health **Andrew Laming**.

Also involved in the talks was National Health Medical Research Council chief executive Professor **Warwick Anderson**.

The meeting follows a \$660,000 boost to ARHEN from Minister Tanya Plibersek to help strengthen the capacity and understanding of the Australian health care system.

ARHEN director Professor Sabina Knight will discuss details of today's meeting with the media.

When: Tuesday 18th June, 2013 at 1.30pm

Who: ARHEN director Professor Sabina Knight

Where: 2R2, Parliament House, Canberra

Media contact: ARHEN National Director Janine Ramsay on 0419 460 820 or email Janine.Ramsay@arhen.org.au

For information on ARHEN's 2013-14 priorities please visit www.arhen.org.au.

About ARHEN

Established in 2001, the Australian Rural Health Education Network (ARHEN) is the peak body for 11 University Departments of Rural Health located in each state and the Northern Territory.

ARHEN's aim is to lead the rural health agenda in education and research to improve health in rural and remote areas.