



Health Workforce  
Queensland

# Health Works

Issue #9 | Autumn 2020

**02**

CEO Message

**03**

Stakeholder Profile

**04**

Scholarships & Bursaries Program

**06**

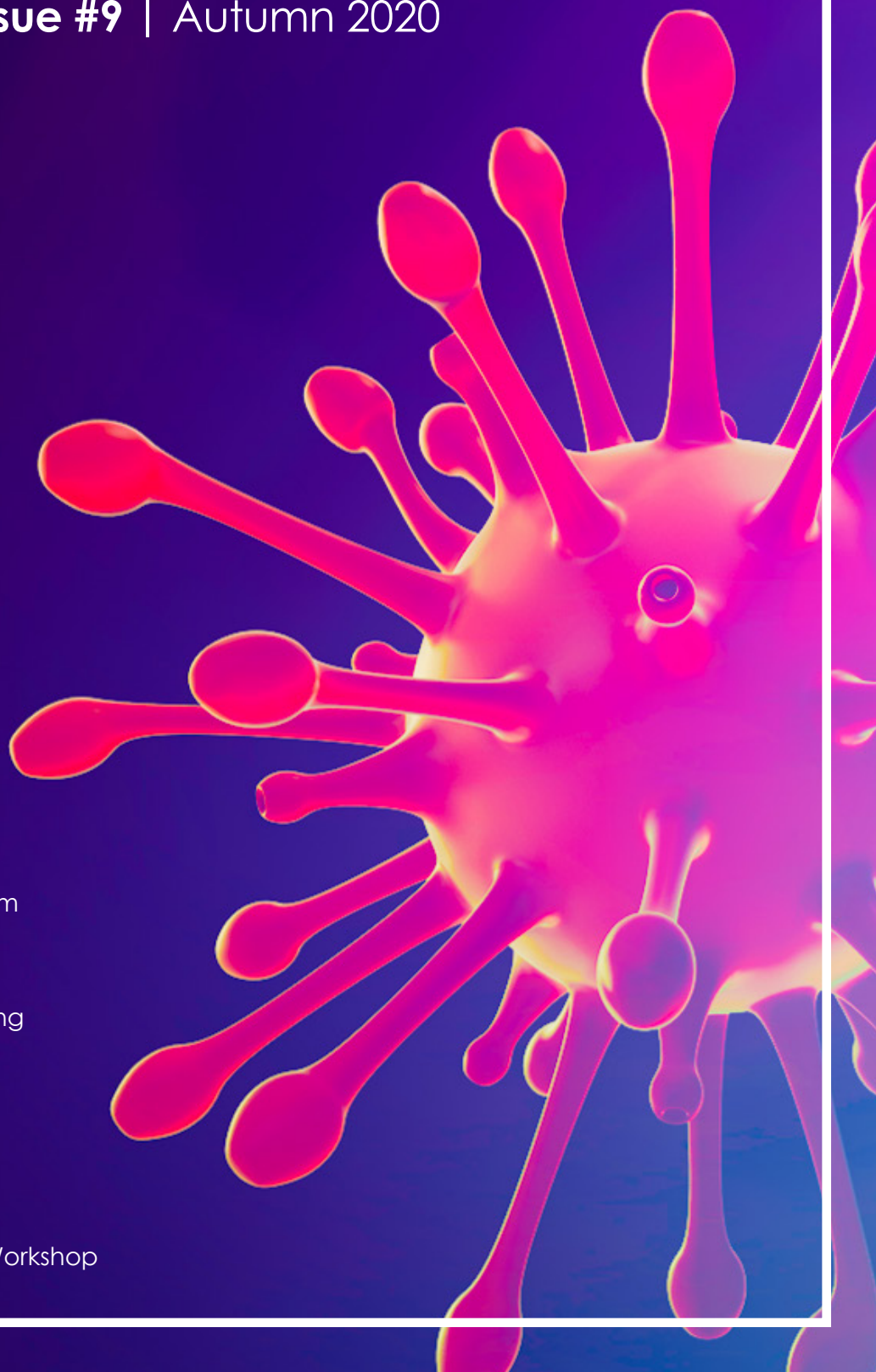
QRMFN Annual General Meeting

**07**

Recruitment Profile

**08**

Vacancies & Upcoming CPD Workshop



# CEO Message

## A Country of Extremes

Recently, we have experienced the extremes of our beautiful Country.

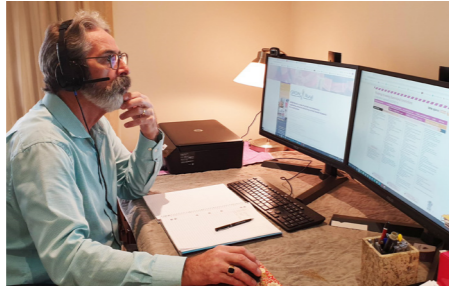
Weather events that have affected so many of the drought-stricken communities of which we work with, floods in North Queensland submerged over 25,000 square metres of country, devastated homes, crops, wildlife and cattle.

Then, followed the worst known start to the bushfire season that Queensland had ever known with scores of bushfires raging across the State, spreading without prejudice.

Resilience is a word widely used to describe our remote and rural brothers and sisters and their communities, we commend each and every one of you for the strength mustered to battle environments that continually expose themselves to us, our thoughts and prayers are with everyone affected in any way, we strive to support all of the remote and rural health workforce.

## COVID-19

The Health Workforce Queensland team continues to work from home as a result of the impacts of COVID-19.



Planning has enabled us to utilise cloud-based services prior to COVID-19. As such, when the decision was made to move all staff off site and work from home, we moved swiftly to enable staff to be 'at home working' even though we were 'operating business as unusual.'

Connection is imperative for all of us, our team leaders and managers have maintained relationships with all team members on a daily basis via the phone and Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

Physical and mental health are so important for us all at any time, but particularly right now. We are encouraging everyone including our staff to stay active and healthy, to continue to be active, we have even been participating as a team in online yoga at lunch times to get out of our seats for an hour. It is so easy to work longer hours when working at home.

During this time, I am participating in State-wide planning meetings in

response to COVID-19. The team and I are involved in more video conference calls than ever as we continue to collaborate, communicate and stay connected with our stakeholders and communities in this continuously changing period.

Whilst we are navigating our work life at this time remember to spend some time having fun, even the smallest thing like logging into a Zoom meeting to see what interesting backgrounds staff have chosen for the meeting can bring a smile and change someone's day.

I look forward to connecting with you all over the coming months as we transition into the next phase of life as we know it now. I do love to call Australia and particularly Queensland, home.

## Service Delivery Activities

Despite the ongoing challenges presented to us in early 2020, our Service Delivery teams have been working hard and have produced some amazing results.

Learn more about these results on page 7.

As we move towards the other side of COVID-19, we are very much looking forward to getting back out on the road and engaging in face to face discussions about how the Agency can be of assistance in our new normal.

# Stakeholder Profile

## Theodore's Heart Beats Strong

Known throughout the community of Theodore and the greater Banana shire region, Dr Bruce Chater and his wife Anne have contributed massively to keep the heartbeat of the community pumping since 1981.

Health Workforce Queensland are honoured to have had the pleasure of working with Dr Chater and Anne on several occasions, and we have witnessed the enormous generosity of the Chater's who continue to welcome, encourage and shape the future health workforce.

Dr Chater is an influential mentor for the John Flynn Placement Program (JFPP) and Anne participates as host and community contact as they house and inform scholars about the ways to connect within community.



## GROW Rural

In 2017, Dr Chater and key staff at the Theodore medical centre committed to participating in the GROW Rural program. Initially a conceptual idea, conversations and planning with Dr Chater started to bring the potential for the program to life.

The first cohort of GROW Rural students graduated in July 2019 and this achievement was due to the input and contribution so generously volunteered by Dr Chater, Anne and key staff at Theodore Medical Centre, as well as the many other key people in all of the participating communities of the Banana Shire. Without this generous support GROW Rural would not be the success it is today.

GROW Rural is a three-year longitudinal rural immersion program delivered in the Banana Shire in Central Queensland. The program is an initiative aligned to additional workforce strategies aimed at increasing the health workforce for remote and rural communities.

[Click Here for more information on GROW Rural](#)

## Dr Bruce Chater

MS BS (Hons) Qld, FRACGP, DRANZCOG, FRACRRM, FACNEM, Assoc Prof Rural and Remote Medicine University of Queensland

Dr Bruce Chater has been the practice principal since 1981 and has particular interests in surgery, obstetrics, back manipulation, acupuncture and nutritional medicine.

## Anne Chater

### Operations and Finance

As Operations and Finance Manager, Anne co-ordinates the many facets of general practice, particularly in the area of finance.

In May 2019 Anne was awarded the Australian Association of Practice Management Queensland Practice Manager of Year. This award is sponsored by Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited.



Dr Bruce and Anne Chater, centre, at 2019 GROW Rural Graduation in Theodore

# Scholarships & Bursaries Program

On Wednesday, March 25 2020, Health Workforce Queensland launched the bi-annual Health Workforce Scholarship Program promotion where applicants who submitted an eligible application, could win themselves a Samsung Galaxy 8.0 Tablet.

At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic was sweeping across Australia, forcing many upcoming educational courses, workshops and conferences to cancel due to Government requirements. This got us thinking – instead of pulling back on the promotion, why not shift our focus and promote the benefits of online education, especially given many vendors were pivoting their business and moving to online education to save their business during this tough time.



A big congratulations to Ellie Price, a Speech Pathologist from Vital Health Roma and Charleville who is the lucky winner of the Samsung Galaxy 8.0 Tablet.

Scholarships or bursaries are available for medical, nursing/ midwifery, dental, allied health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers providing primary health care services to locations in MMM 3-7 within private practice, non-government and not-for-profit sector.

Applications for a Health Workforce scholarship or bursary are open all year round, so if you or someone you know is interested, then check out our website for all the eligibility criteria and details on how to submit an application. If you have any queries, please contact us via [scholarships@healthworkforce.com.au](mailto:scholarships@healthworkforce.com.au)

We continued with our scholarship promotion as we knew that applicants needed our assistance more than ever in upskilling their qualifications. During the application period, we:



Received a total of **75** applications



**50**

of these applications were deemed eligible as per the terms of the scholarship program



**20**

of these applications were received from general practitioners



**2**

of these applications were received from nurses or midwives



**28**

of these applications were received from allied health professionals

Initially we were concerned that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, that those on the frontline would not be interested in submitting an application to receive scholarship or bursary assistance, but we were pleasantly surprised to find those in rural and remote Queensland were still as keen as ever to improve their skills, capacity and scope of practice.

# Scholarships & Bursaries Program

National numbers: July 2019 - Dec 2019



**1,990**

combined scholarships & bursaries awarded



**42%**

increase compared to previous reporting period



**\$1,146,426**

total funds awarded July - Dec 2019



## Top 5 Occupations

- 604 - GP
- 292 - Physiotherapy
- 265 - Nursing/Midwifery
- 158 - Occupational Therapist
- 156 - Psychology/ Other Mental Health



**55%**

increase in awarded bursaries



**1,574**

scholarship recipients

**174**

bursary recipients

**completed their study**



## QRMFN AGM Goes Virtual



### About this Event

Join us for our Annual General Meeting which will be held via Zoom teleconference this year.

Once you register for the AGM, we will send you a link to access the teleconference the week of the meeting.

[Click Here to Register](#)

• The AGM will take place on Thursday 4 June at 10am.

The Queensland Rural Medical Family Network (QRMFN) was formed to recognise, empower and support rural medical spouses, partners and families. In doing so, we also strive to support the doctors in remote and rural practice and training throughout Queensland.

QRMFN and its services are designed to enhance the lives of medical families in rural communities. QRMFN recognises that a doctor's family plays a crucial role in his or her decision to take up and remain in rural practice.

## Recruitment Profile: The Sweet Spot

Working as a General Practitioner in Hervey Bay, QLD, Dr Muhammad Shah obtained his permanent residency in 2019. Given this achievement, Dr Shah was advised that he was required to move to a DPA location to fulfill his permanent residency requirements.

Dr Shah discovered a recent Health Workforce Queensland recruitment advert for a General Practitioner role in Bundaberg. Dr Shah quickly jumped at this opportunity as it was within his scope of practice and in an area that reminded him of his homeland.

Dr Shah kindly provided his insight into the recruitment process and answered some questions:

I wanted to pay my heartiest thanks to you and Health Workforce Queensland Team in general, in regard to your fully committed support in the process of MDRAP application approval. Your step by step, timely and prompt guidance in the application process was very pivotal for the smooth transition from Hervey Bay to Bundaberg on DPA location.

Furthermore, I would also take this opportunity to stress that I am always there to help the communities through Health Workforce Queensland platform and really feel honoured being part of this organisation.

**What was it about the role in Bundaberg that appealed to you?**

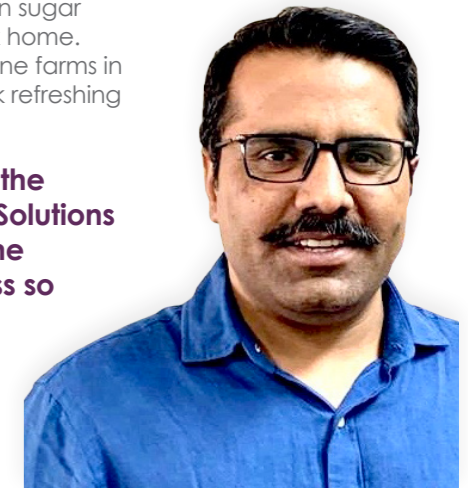
I was working as a General Practitioner in Hervey Bay and had been living in Hervey Bay for about 3 years. As soon as I got my permanent residence, and due to changes to GP practice, I had to move to an area with DPA location. Bundaberg is DPA location and almost same demography as Hervey Bay, so it was appealing to me to settle in an area where I can practice within scope of my practice and fulfill the requirements as being an IMG.

**Now that you are settled into your new role, what has been the most rewarding part of the role?**

Out of many rewarding aspects of my role, the most satisfying and rewarding aspect for me is that the community is welcoming and more open, taking hand to hand in the health journey and allowing more close follow ups as per plan.

**What is your favourite thing about Bundaberg?**

I was born and bred on sugar cane farmhouse back home. The beautiful sugar cane farms in Bundaberg bring back refreshing memories.



**What was it about the Health Workforce Solutions team that made the placement process so easy?**

Prompt guidance for paperwork in a timely fashion made things possible for me to be transitioned smoothly.



## JFPP All the Numbers

1 July 2019 - 31 Dec 2019



971

Total number of students in the JFPP program today



594

Community contacts



An increase of 400

placement weeks compared to previous reporting period



25

Highest ever number of eligible Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander applications



749

Mentors



548

Hosts



996

Placement weeks



434

Placements

## Health Workforce Solutions Success!

Over the past three months the Health Workforce Solutions team have made over 400 phone calls to practices throughout rural and remote Queensland due to the COVID-19 pandemic to offer support and assistance.

Supplementary to this activity, the team have successfully placed 12 health professionals into private practices, including 2 placements at Aboriginal Health Services.

These placements comprise of the following:

- MMM 6: 2x GPs
- MMM 5: 3x GPs
- MMM 4: 1x GP, 1x Occupational Therapist, 1x Enrolled Nurse
- MMM 3: 1x GP
- MMM 2: 1x GP, 1x Psychologist
- MMM 1: 1x GP



Please contact our team via [hws@healthworkforce.com.au](mailto:hws@healthworkforce.com.au) if you require any practice, relocation or recruitment support.



# Start a Rural Adventure in Queensland

## General Practitioner

### Maryborough & Hervey Bay

This opportunity is for a committed General Practitioner looking for a full time position. We have two practices, one is located in Maryborough and the other in Hervey Bay. There will be opportunity for broad general practice work, occupational health, skin cancer work and fellowship mentoring if necessary.

### Mount Isa

Gidgee Healing is currently seeking a General Practitioner to deliver integrated, comprehensive primary health care services at our Pioneer Clinic in Mount Isa. This is a targeted recruitment location for the 2020-21 Remote Vocational Training Scheme (RVTS).

### Bowen

This private medical centre is a local indigenous community organisation that also runs a housing co-operative and many health, family support and employment projects. You will possess a healthy appreciation of and commit to utilise chronic disease prevention and management community health programs on offer in community.

## Practice Nurse

### Cloncurry

A Medical Centre in Cloncurry has a great opportunity for a full-time Registered Nurse or Enrolled Nurse with medication endorsement to join their team. They are looking for a proactive candidate to fill this role, who can work independently and provide comprehensive nursing care to all categories of patients at the practice.

## Speech Pathologist

### Roma

This clinic has a full time Speech Pathologist position available. The successful applicant will bring a passion for improving rural, remote and Indigenous access to health services to the role. This organisation is passionate about improving rural, remote and Indigenous access to health services.

For more information about any of the vacancies listed visit our website [healthworkforce.com.au](http://healthworkforce.com.au)

## Trauma Workshop

5 – 6 September 2020 | Brisbane, QLD

**It is widely recognised General Practitioners, particularly those in, rural and remote locations will be called upon to manage trauma in its early phase.**

Therefore, General practitioners in rural and remote areas require a higher level of emergency care skills to manage the trauma patient until specialist care can be accessed.

During this one and a half day workshops, our lead facilitator, Dr Jamie Thomas, Emergency Physician at the Emergency & Trauma Centre, Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital, will provide rural doctors and nurses with cross domain, team-based learning opportunities across a number of trauma topics.

Save **up to \$235** off your registration fee by securing our **early bird rate by 3 July 2020.**

[Click Here to Register](#)