

**From:** Alex Shaw  
**To:** [medboardconsultation](#)  
**Subject:** Rural Generalism Specialist Submission  
**Date:** Friday, 10 November 2023 12:32:42 PM

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Dear colleagues, I would like to submit my testimony regarding the application for Rural Generalism to become a recognised speciality.

I fully support the joint RACGP ACRRM submission to the AMC on rural generalist practice as a recognised speciality with a defined scope of clinical practice within the specialty of general practice.

Rural generalists deserve recognition as specialists by the Australian government for several important reasons

1. **Diverse Expertise:** Rural generalists are equipped with a broad skill set that extends beyond typical general practice. They must handle various medical situations, from primary care to anaesthetics, emergency medicine and obstetrics, all in the context of limited resources and remote locations, this requires specialised training. Therefore these practitioners are specialists.
2. **Unique Challenges:** Rural and remote areas face distinct healthcare challenges, including limited access to specialists and resources. Rural generalists are essential in addressing these challenges effectively, making their expertise invaluable.
3. **Improved Patient Care:** Recognising rural generalists as specialists ensures that patients in remote regions receive the highest quality care, as by acknowledging their expertise, the government can help attract and retain qualified professionals in these underserved areas. Specialisation also amplifies the voice of rural generalists , which then helps to address the issues facing the populations they serve.
4. **Training Investment:** These healthcare professionals undergo additional training to meet the specific needs of rural communities. Recognising their specialization can incentivize more doctors to pursue this training, ultimately benefiting the healthcare system.

In summary :Acknowledging rural generalists as specialists by the Australian government is crucial for ensuring quality healthcare in rural areas and attracting talent to address the unique challenges these communities face.

Additionally Rural Generalists have a huge role in closing the gaps in health care for indigenous populations. Following the ' Voice ' referendum it is now even more important that there are strong advocates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Rural generalist specialties have a profoundly positive impact on Aboriginal health and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, primarily due to their unique role and specialised skills tailored to the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Here are some key

ways in which rural generalists contribute:

1. **Culturally Sensitive Care:** Rural generalists receive training that emphasises cultural competency and sensitivity, making them better equipped to provide healthcare that respects and understands the cultural backgrounds and traditions of indigenous populations. This fosters trust and effective communication, leading to more positive health outcomes.
2. **Accessibility:** Many indigenous communities are located in remote and underserved areas with limited access to healthcare services. Rural generalists often work in these regions, ensuring that Aboriginal people have access to essential medical care, including primary healthcare, emergency services, and preventive measures.
3. **Comprehensive Care:** Rural generalists offer a wide range of medical services, including primary care, obstetrics, and emergency medicine. This comprehensive care approach is especially valuable for indigenous communities, as it addresses their diverse healthcare needs and reduces the need for patients to travel long distances to receive care.
4. **Community Engagement:** Rural generalists often become integral parts of the communities they serve. They build relationships and collaborate with indigenous community leaders and healthcare workers, fostering a sense of ownership and trust in the healthcare system.
5. **Health Education:** These healthcare professionals not only treat illnesses but also play a crucial role in health education and prevention. They work to improve the overall health literacy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait people, empowering them to make informed decisions about their well-being.
6. **Reducing Health Disparities:** Rural generalists' presence in indigenous communities contributes to reducing health disparities by addressing specific health challenges and tailoring interventions to meet the unique needs of these populations.

In summary, rural generalists are specialists and have a profoundly positive impact on the communities they serve. Their training and commitment makes them a unique speciality that should be recognised and supported by the Australian Government.

Dr Alex Shaw  
GP, Rural Generalist  
GP Anaesthetist  
(JCCA Accredited)

FACRRM  
FRNZCGP  
MRCGP [REDACTED]  
BMBS  
Diploma of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene [REDACTED]  
Diploma in the Medical Care of Catastrophes  
(Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of London)  
Ex Royal Navy Medical Officer  
[REDACTED]

**MCNZ 75034**

**GMC 6154225**

**RDA NSW member NM0003150**

Tel :0061426998460