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RURAL SCHOOLS VITAL FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Schools in rural areas provide much more than educational services and are vital to the economic and social wellbeing of many communities, a new report has revealed. Commissioned by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) and titled 'More than an Education - Leadership for rural school community partnerships', the report found rural schools provide a number of economic and social benefits, many of which have not been well understood.

Co-author of the report Dr Sue Kilpatrick, from the University of Tasmania's Centre for Research and Learning in Regional Australia, said rural school community partnerships deliver a variety of positive outcomes for youth and for the community, including the provision of education and training that meets student and community needs, improved school retention, increased retention of youth in rural communities, positive environmental outcomes, cultural and recreational benefits from sharing physical and human school resources.

"However, schools can also be a vital, but often overlooked, component of rural community development and provide one of the major opportunities for community interaction while also helping to build individual and community social capital, including knowledge resources."

The full text of RIRDC's statement is available at http://www.rirdc.gov.au/pub/media_releases/5aug02.html and the full report is available at <http://www.rirdc.gov.au/reports/HCC/02-055.pdf>

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Interested in becoming a "friend" of the Alliance? Become more involved with the work of the Alliance by becoming a "friend". "friends" support the Alliance by being an integral part of the Alliance's policy and evaluation process. They also receive other benefits. For more information on membership see <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/friends.htm>

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AARN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Association for Australian Rural Nurses (AARN) National President, Associate Professor Karen Francis, has announced that Ms Wendy Armstrong has been appointed to the new position of Executive Director of the AARN.

"Wendy is a registered nurse who comes to AARN with a solid knowledge of rural health and the issues facing rural nurses", Professor Francis said. "She has a wealth of experience as a nurse in rural and remote regions, including in the South Pacific, and a proven track record in project management."

At a time of intense pressure within the nursing profession, rural nurses need a robust and responsive Association that can not only support its members, but also advocate for the many rural nurses whose voices often go unheard.

Ms Armstrong will commence on 26 August 2002, and will be located in a newly-established AARN Secretariat within the National Rural Health Alliance rooms in Deakin West, Canberra. Professor Francis expressed AARN's thanks to the Office of Rural Health in the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing for their support of this initiative.

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PARTYline is the official newsletter of the National Rural Health Alliance. Keep up to date with rural health policy information and good news stories on living and working in the rural health community. Available online on <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/partyline.htm> or receive a hard copy by emailing michele@ruralhealth.org.au

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From: Kirsty McEwin <kmcewin@nswrdn.com.au>
Subject: Research Officer Wanted

The NSW Rural Doctors Network is seeking a full time research officer for 12 months to collate and analyse national data generated from the surveys of female GPs working and residing in rural NSW. The Research officer will also be responsible for recommending strategies to increase the numbers of female medical practitioners wanting to practice in rural and remote areas.

Salary \$46,400 - \$52,200 (negotiable). The closing date is 22nd August 2002.

For further details please phone or email Kirsty McEwin, RDN Director of Medical Workforce Planning on 02 9313 5955 or kmcewin@nswrdn.com.au

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OVERSEAS DOCTORS SHUN RURAL POSTS
(Extract from Sydney Daily Telegraph, 17 August 2002)

A State Government drive to attract overseas doctors to work in rural areas has failed to

recruit a single person in the six months it has been operating. The full story is at http://www.dailytelegraph.news.com.au/common/story_page/0,5936,4917765%255E21302,00.html

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BUSH CRISIS LINE - 1800 805 391

Bush Crisis Line is a twenty-four hour confidential telephone support and debriefing service for multi-disciplinary remote health practitioners and their families. It is staffed by qualified psychologists with remote and cross-cultural experience, is toll free and available from anywhere in Australia. For more information http://www.crana.org.au/pandp_psn.html

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GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP AGED CARE WORKFORCE STRATEGY

A NATIONAL Aged Care Workforce Strategy will be developed to identify the workforce profile of the aged care sector and its needs until 2010, Minister for Ageing Kevin Andrews announced recently.

Mr Andrews said: "I have asked the Aged Care Workforce Committee, which comprises representatives from my Department as well as the aged care sector, to develop, as a priority, a National Workforce Strategy, which will be a framework for a viable aged care sector. This will include a survey of current and future workforce needs, which is particularly important given our ageing population.

Mr Andrews challenged the aged care sector to embrace a minimum qualification for aged care workers to Certificate III level or its equivalent before 2008.

In the May Budget, the Minister announced that \$47.2 million would be provided to fund up to 1000 scholarships for aged care nursing students from regional areas as well as more training for personal care workers in smaller, less viable aged care homes.

The full text of Mr Andrews' statement is at <http://www.health.gov.au/mediarel/yr2002/ka/ka02074.htm>

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The "Australian Journal of Rural Health" is a refereed journal with a national and international reputation for quality scholarship. Its focus is multi-disciplinary and it includes articles of interest to general practitioners, nurses, allied health professionals, pharmacists, health administrators, universities and rural health units. Reduced rates apply to members of some organisations. For more information see <http://www.blackwell-science.com/ajr>

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Extracts from ABC Health-Updates, August 15, 2002

ATSIC ARMY PROGRAM PROVING SUCCESSFUL (7.30 Report: 12/8/2002)

Thirty years of government effort to improve health conditions in many remote Aboriginal communities has been a frustrating experience, not least for Aborigines. Six years ago, the Howard Government turned to the army, and AACAP was born - the ATSIC-Army Community Assistance Program. Many outback communities have now benefited from new water and sewerage systems, housing, roads and health clinics. Full story at <http://abc.net.au/7.30/s646775.htm>

COUNTRY TOWNS NEED BETTER INCENTIVES FOR GPS (The World Today: 9/8/2002)

In an effort to attract doctors to rural areas, many country towns now offer lucrative employment contracts with commencement rewards. But young doctors say the incentives don't work. The full story is at <http://abc.net.au/worldtoday/s644713.htm>

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7th NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

The 7th National Rural Health Conference is to be held at the Grand Chancellor in Hobart Tasmania from 1 - 4 March 2003. Registration for the Conference will be available in September 2002. This will include online registration for the first time. The Conference website is at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/seventhconf/seventhconf.htm>

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CONTRIBUTION AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION AND DISCLAIMER

The NRHA e-forum is edited by a third party moderator, Jim Groves. Contributions are sought on any topic relevant to rural health concerns. Please send contributions to the moderator at grovesc@winshop.com.au.

As such, the Alliance does not control postings and the contents do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Alliance. Nor do postings necessarily reflect the view of Jim Groves or any organisation he is associated with. Jim Groves can be contacted at grovesc@winshop.com.au.

The e-forum is sent to a mailing list of the Alliance and those have indicated interest through the subscription box at the NRHA Web site (<http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>). This issue is going to 1,147 recipients. Please forward a copy to any colleague you think may be interested.

To subscribe, send a message saying "subscribe NRHA eforum" to grovesc@winshop.com.au. To unsubscribe, send a message saying "unsubscribe NRHA eforum" to grovesc@winshop.com.au.

