

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum – 24 December 1999

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"A BUMPER CHRISTMAS FOR RURAL HEALTH"

That's the title of a media release from the Federal Minister for Health, Dr Wooldridge, on the Government's \$60 million three-pronged package to retain and attract long-serving country doctors involving

- \* a Christmas bonus to Doctors based on their length of service and the remoteness of their practice
- \* Rural Australia Medical Undergraduate Scholarships which will provide around \$10,000 for 186 country students to study medicine. "This is another first for Australia - it is designed to turnaround the fact that only five per cent of our medical students are from country areas," Dr Wooldridge said. "Country students are almost ten times more likely to practise in a rural or remote area than city students, so it is vital we get a strong flow into our medical schools."
- \* an increased number of medical students to work in country Australia during vacation periods through the John Flynn Scholarship Scheme to 600 students in 2000.

The Minister's media release is at <http://www.health.gov.au/mediarel/yr1999/mw/mw99129.htm>. The Department's Website is at [www.health.gov.au/hsdd/gp](http://www.health.gov.au/hsdd/gp)

The response from the Opposition's Health spokesperson, Jenny Macklin, was to the effect that this "announcement" represents old news, and cannot hide the continuing decline in rural doctor numbers.

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eMJA CHRISTMAS UPDATE

The bumper new year edition (see 'Contents') contains both a section on Rural Healthcare, and a must-read article about a spider bite (the third in the Doctors' Tales section, under a title relating to a cream cheese and salmon bagel). This is impressive stuff! See <http://www.mja.com.au/>

It's getting close to the time when we shall no longer be here for a while, nor you there. So allow me to wish you all a great Christmas and a safe and happy new year, on behalf of all of us here at the Alliance Office.

Gordon Gregory  
Executive Director, NRHA

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CONTRIBUTION AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION AND DISCLAIMER

The NRHA e-forum is a forum for the expression of YOUR views. Contributions are sought on any topic relevant to rural health concerns. Please send contributions to the moderator, Jim Groves, at grovesc@winshop.com.au.

The NRHA e-forum is edited by a third party moderator, Jim Groves. 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 662 recipients. Please forward a copy to any colleague you think may be interested.

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