Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie
Deputy Leader of The Nationals
Minister for Rural Health
Minister for Sport
Minister for Regional Communications

The Hon Michael McCormack MP
Member for Riverina
Minister for Veterans’ Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

20 Junior Doctors for local health services

2 February 2018

Twenty junior medical officers will undertake part of their on-the-job training locally in the Riverina as a result of Federal Government funding to increase the number of doctors training in rural areas.

The Government has provided $1,304,967 to the Murrumbidgee Local Health District to enable four general practices in the region to each take five medical interns a year on rotation.

The Nationals Member for Riverina, Michael McCormack, has welcomed the news with Glenrock General Practice in Glenfield Park Wagga Wagga, Coolamon Shire Medical Centre, Finley Medical Centre and the Victoria Street Surgery in Temora all taking trainees through the program.

“Having junior medical officers living and working locally will bring a number of benefits to the towns and the communities involved,” Mr McCormack said.

“These trainee doctors will be seeing and working with patients first hand while learning under supervision of experienced doctors.

“They will add the equivalent of four full-time new doctors which represents a significant boost in the health services available to patients locally.”
Minister for Rural Health, Senator Bridget McKenzie, acknowledged incentives play a role in encouraging doctors into rural towns and welcomed the program’s flexibility.

“The funding will be used to provide salary and conditions for the trainee doctors equivalent to what they would be receiving in a metropolitan location, as well as clinical supervision, support costs, travel and accommodation, and other costs associated with hosting the trainees,” Minister McKenzie said.

“Having these junior doctors training in these towns provides an immediate benefit to communities.

“It also gives trainees a taste of general practice in a country town making them much more likely to stay on there or to choose to work in another rural community, once they are fully qualified.

“The Federal Government is committed to increasing the number of doctors working in rural areas so that all Australians can enjoy the health outcomes that our health system can deliver.”

The funding for the training is provided through the Government’s Rural Junior Doctor Training Innovation Fund.

Nationally, the fund will distribute $13.6 million to 11 organisations from its first round of grants. Up to $18.6 million is available under the fund’s second round.

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Media contact:
Minister McKenzie: Sally-Anne Kahl: 0427 604 564
Michael McCormack: Shane Manning: 0439 550 506