

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 17 & 19 October 2012

Question: E12-318

OUTCOME 12: Health Workforce Capacity

Topic: GENERAL PRACTICE RURAL INCENTIVES PROGRAM

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Senator: Senator McKenzie

Question:

Provide detail around the promotion of the GP Rural Incentives program and the strategies implemented to reach the target.

Answer:

Following the commencement of the Rural Health Workforce Strategy on 1 July 2010, communication strategies were developed in 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 to promote the package of initiatives under the Strategy which includes GP Rural Incentive Program (GPRIP). Activities under the communication strategy included:

- Mailouts to doctors informing about programs under the Strategy including GPRIP;
- The Rural Health Champions Program which provides an opportunity for the community to interact with doctors experienced in rural practice. This interaction is through conferences and events, as well as a dedicated blog site www.ruralchampions.govspace.gov.au;
- The Go Rural Program which supplies urban doctors the opportunity to experience rural lifestyle through organised events as well as access to promotional information online or via SMS;
- Conference kits that provide advice on lifestyle and incentives to interested parties, including GPRIP;
- A series of videos are available which promote rural practice; and
- information which is available on the Rural and Regional Health Australia website at www.ruralhealthaustralia.gov.au

In 2012-13, the Rural Health Champions Program, the Go Rural Program, and the provision of conference kits at significant conferences and events, will continue to provide information regarding incentives, including GPRIP, to general practitioners and medical students across Australia.

Rural Workforce Agencies in each state and the Northern Territory also continually work to promote the GPRIP to the medical community as an incentive to attract and retain medical practitioners.