

Rural NSW Ambulance paramedic providing emotional support to peers a winner in national primary health care awards

Matthew Simpson, a rural NSW Ambulance paramedic specialist was named the Young Leader Award winner in the HESTA Primary Health Care Awards last night, for his work in driving greater patient care through mentoring, training and improving processes for paramedics.

Working as a Paramedic Specialist – Intensive and Extended Care with NSW Ambulance, Mr Simpson is a highly skilled paramedic who brings a broad range of practical experience and clinical knowledge, to the delivery of patient-focused care.

“Life as a NSW Ambulance paramedic is challenging and rewarding. Sharing of knowledge between peers and across health professions is essential and being actively engaged within the health care community allows clinicians to work collaboratively to improve conditions and processes from the inside out,” said Mr Simpson.

“I mostly work in a small town, Leeton, with a population of 7000. Dealing with people during a time of crisis and when they’re most vulnerable is challenging, more so because they are people I know. I love what I do especially the community and family support that comes with working in a small town.”

“For paramedics, providing mental and emotional support is critical to what we do. Currently, we do have a situation around mental health. And mental health is not a separate health condition, it is a health condition.”

Mr Simpson is highly regarded by his peers for his approachability and openness when debriefing after difficult situations and for taking time to educate and support colleagues by providing mentoring and emotional support where necessary.

HESTA CEO, Debby Blakey presented Mr Simpson with the Award at a dinner in Melbourne on 10 November.

“We are pleased to recognise the leadership and commitment shown by Mr Simpson to his profession, while also acknowledging the diversity of disciplines necessary to deliver outstanding levels of care, and better health outcomes,” Ms Blakey said.

The HESTA Primary Health Care Awards recognise the dedication and professionalism of those working at the frontline of health care, including physiotherapists, dentists, pharmacists, therapists, GPs, rehabilitation professionals, health educators and medical practice managers.

Mr Simpson received a \$5,000 **ME** EveryDay Transaction Account and \$5,000 towards further education, courtesy of proud Awards sponsor, **ME**.

Other Award winners were Individual Distinction, Don Palmer from NSW, who also received a \$5,000 **ME** EveryDay Transaction Account and \$5,000 towards further education. The regional podiatry team from Boab Health Services in Broome took out the Team Excellence Award and received a \$10,000 development grant, also courtesy of **ME**.

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