

08 March 2017

HESTA scholarship aims to inspire future rural health leaders

HESTA super fund is giving 10 university health students the chance to attend the pre-eminent conference in Australian rural and remote health, through a new scholarship announced today.

The \$37 billion industry super fund which has more than 820,000 members working in health and community services across Australia, will support scholarship winners to attend the 14th National Rural Health Conference held in Cairns in April.

The scholarships are being delivered in partnership with Rural Health Workforce Australia (RHWA), which supports the National Rural Health Student Network.

The HESTA scholarships are available for medical, nursing and allied health students who belong to Rural Health Clubs affiliated with the National Rural Health Student Network. At least one is reserved for a student of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage as part of HESTA's Reconciliation Action Plan that aims to increase equity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

HESTA CEO, Debby Blakey, said the scholarships are an opportunity to support the vital work health and community services do in rural and remote areas, as well as sharing in the commitment to improve opportunities and health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

"We're delighted to offer these scholarships supporting students who are potential future leaders of rural health and community services in Australia", Ms Blakey said.

"HESTA has a unique role to play as a national leader in the provision of superannuation and as a fund dedicated to the health and community services sector. Through the HESTA Awards program, and now these scholarships, we're supporting and acknowledging the sector's commitment to excellence and innovation that's improving the lives of Australians across the country."

Candidates will be selected with particular emphasis on their commitment to practising in rural Australia.

The scholarship enables students to attend the conference that may not otherwise have the opportunity to, by covering the costs of flights, accommodation and registration for the four-day conference.

RHWA Chair Dr Ross Maxwell said the scholarships wouldn't be possible without the backing of HESTA, which shares RHWA's commitment to the development of future rural health leaders.

"More health professionals are needed in the country, which is why we're always keen to encourage the future workforce," Dr Maxwell said.

HESTA and RHWA acknowledge the commitment and passion for the cause of rural health shown by conference host, the National Rural Health Alliance.

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Keynote speakers at the conference include Dr David Gillespie, Assistant Minister for Health; Shadow Health Minister, Catherine King; Janine Mohamed, CEO of the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives; and Dr Mark Wenitong, Medical Director of the Apunipima Cape York Health Council.

Applications open today for the HESTA National Rural Health Conference Scholarship and close at 5pm AEDT on Monday 20 March 2017. Winners will be announced on Monday 27 March.

Find out more and apply online www.rhwa.org.au/hestascholarship

Ends

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About HESTA

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We're a specialist industry super fund dedicated to people who provide some of the best health and community services in the world.

With more than 820,000 members and \$37 billion invested globally on their behalf, we've learned a thing or two about looking after our members. hesta.com.au

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