

## Media release

### Rural and regional areas crying out for more doctors

Melbourne, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015

The Association of Medical Recruiters Australia and New Zealand (AMRANZ) is calling for the Assistant Minister for Health, the Hon Senator Fiona Nash to extend a review of DWS (District of Workforce Shortage) areas to regional and rural areas of Australia that are crying out for more doctors.

“The recently announced review of DWS (District of Workforce Shortage) areas in metropolitan centres is the most comprehensive review of these areas for several years and it has been long overdue”, noted Corrine Taylor FRCSA, Co-Chair of AMRANZ. “However, we need to continue this work if the shortage of doctors in rural and regional communities is to be addressed.”

“We would encourage the Minister and the Department of Health to urgently review the DWS area classifications in regional and rural Australia where they are crying out for doctors,” continues Ms Taylor. “Most people believe that the current regulation is designed to increase the number of doctors available to work in country areas, when in fact very few of those areas are classified as DWS. This substantially limits the access to doctors and ultimately health services in rural areas.”

A district of workforce shortage (DWS) classification allows GP practices and medical services in a designated geographical area to recruit doctors from countries like the UK or New Zealand and Ireland in order to improve the access to medical services.

AMRANZ member medical recruiters from around the country report that while there is an improved supply of Australian trained doctors, most of them do not want to work in the outer suburbs and rural areas where there are the greatest needs.

“Many of the outer metropolitan growth corridors and growing rural and regional centres around the country are experiencing an increasing demand for more doctors because they cannot attract Australian trained doctors to their area. The DWS classification provides the opportunity for practices in those areas to employ suitably qualified doctors from countries like the UK and Ireland, which will make a large difference to these communities.”

Finding suitable numbers of well qualified doctors for these areas will also require recruitment from a wider pool of doctors trained overseas, said Ms Taylor. “This requires a coordinated effort between the government funded agencies and private recruiters in order to meet the growing need for doctors.”

AMRANZ member medical recruiters have for some time been frustrated as they are unable to access the government funded supports that were previously available for the international recruitment of doctors. “There remains a shortage of doctors in rural areas which is being exacerbated under the current arrangements which mean that private recruiters have been crowded out of the rural and regional recruitment market,” said Ms Taylor.

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**About AMRANZ**

The Association of Medical Recruiters of Australia and New Zealand (**AMRANZ**) was established in 2005, as a Special Interest Group, under the auspices of the Recruitment and Consulting Services Association (RCSA). AMRANZ provides a focal point for recruitment consultancies whose business is the recruitment of medical practitioners into and within Australia and New Zealand. All AMRANZ Members abide by the RCSA Code for Professional Conduct and Disciplinary and Dispute Resolution Procedures (DDRP).

**About RCSA**

The Recruitment and Consulting Services Association (RCSA) is the leading industry body for talent management and workforce solutions in Australia and New Zealand. With over 3,300 corporate and individual Members, the Association sets professional standards, conducts research, educates and develops members' skills, monitors industry development and lobbies governments on issues directly affecting members. RCSA is a member of Ciett (International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies), a global network of associations that promote quality standards and recognition of the positive contribution of private employment services to better functioning labour markets.

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**Interviews and Contacts:**

Corrine Taylor FRCSA is available for telephone interviews. Please contact Simon Schweigert at the RCSA to arrange a suitable time.