



Media Release

31 October 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE USE

Rural health careers promotion tour 2 ready to roll

A second grand promotional tour of the regions to encourage rural school pupils into rural health careers will take place this November.

Organised by the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network and supported by 40 medical, nursing and allied health students, the tour will take in 41 rural high schools, seven rural hospitals and 11 General Practices in Southland, South Otago, Wairarapa, Hawke's Bay, Coromandel, Waikato and Northland during a three-week period from 4-22 November.

The tertiary health students will speak to year nine and ten pupils about the possibility of careers in health in sessions that will allow the school pupils to have hands-on experience with instruments such as stethoscopes and blood pressure cuffs as well as hear first-hand from the tertiary health students about their own journeys into their medical and health careers. The pupils will also be directed to the newly launched website www.sorha.org.nz which has been developed by Students of Rural Health Aotearoa – New Zealand's first and only multidisciplinary rural health student network.

It follows a highly successful inaugural tour in June this year when similar visits were made to 36 rural high schools in Akaroa, Lincoln, Rolleston, Ellesmere, Ashburton, Methven, Darfield, Geraldine, Fairlie, Twizel, Timaru, Oamaru, Waimate, Palmerston, Ranfurly, Milton, Cromwell, Roxburgh, Dunstan, Wanaka, Otaki, Levin, Palmerston North, Taihape, Turangi and Taupo.

"The enthusiastic response we received from the tertiary health students and schools on the first tour was hugely encouraging and we are keen to complete the second round before the end of the school year," said New Zealand Rural General Practice Network Chief Executive Dalton Kelly.

The visits are designed to utilize current tertiary health students to encourage rural young to think about the possibilities of training to become health professionals - doctors, nurses, optometrists, physiotherapists, midwives, pharmacists, dentists and allied health professionals.

"In arranging current health students to speak about their own experiences and ambitions, it is an important opportunity to inspire the next generation of rural health practitioners."

"If we are to reverse a chronic shortage of healthcare professionals in rural communities, we must actively encourage young people from rural communities into health careers," said Mr Kelly.

Further tours are planned for June and November 2020.

Dalton Kelly: 027 231 0067