



Media Release

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Rural health careers promotion tour hits the road

Next week, our 2020 rural schools tour kicks off with the first group of tertiary health students hitting the road to inspire school pupils to pursue rural health careers.

The rural schools tour is a key part of the Rural Health Careers Promotion Programme, led by the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network (NZRGPN) and supported by the Ministry of Health, which aims to promote rural health careers.

This year about 40 medical, nursing, dentistry, pharmacy, optometry, midwifery and allied health students are involved in the school tours visiting rural high schools in Whanganui, Manawatu, Taranaki, Tasman, Canterbury, Westland, West Waikato, and Northland over four weeks from 9 November-4 December 2020.

During the school visits, the tertiary students will run interactive workshops with year nine and ten pupils teaching them how to perform CPR and take blood pressure, as well as discussing other areas of health including midwifery and dentistry.

The tertiary students will have the chance to share their own training experiences and journeys into health, ultimately inspiring rural young people to think about the possibilities of training to become health professionals.

The rural school visits, which are delivered in partnership with Students of Rural Health Aotearoa (SoRHA), focus on year nine and ten students as research suggests this age group is more inclined to be thinking about their career at this time.

The school visits also target rural areas where there are higher populations of Māori students. NZRGPN recognises the importance of encouraging Māori students to think about health careers to help build a strong future rural Māori health workforce.

“Inspiring the next generations of rural health professionals is one step towards reversing the current rural health workforce crisis in New Zealand.”

“Targeting rural Māori students in particular is critical in reducing the inequities in Māori health outcomes and by encouraging them to follow health careers, we can help strengthen the Māori health workforce for the future.”

“Getting current health students to speak about their own experiences and ambitions, is an important opportunity to showcase the career possibilities for rural school pupils” said New Zealand Rural General Practice Network Chief Executive Dr Grant Davidson.

When the tertiary students are not visiting schools, they will have the opportunity to visit some rural hospitals and general practices and talk with rural health professionals about their experiences.

The rural school tour benefits not only school pupils, but also the tertiary students who are given the chance to reconnect with their own rural communities and see first-hand what it is like to work in rural health.

Media Contact:

Rumer Grace Archer (Communications Advisor)

021472556

For reference:

The tertiary students on the tour are members of SoRHA, a network to connect people studying medicine, nursing and allied health and give them a voice in improving health outcomes for all rural and remote New Zealanders. Take a look at the [SoRHA website](#) for more information.