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Goldfields international medical workforce receives ongoing support

A program to support International Medical Graduates currently working in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and Kambalda has been extended thanks to the State Government's Royalties for Regions program.

The Forward to Fellowship program provides International Medical Graduates with personal, professional and training support to help their integration into the Australian medical system.

Member for Kalgoorlie Wendy Duncan MLA, said the \$532,100 injection of Royalties for Regions funds means better support for the doctors so that they are more likely to stay in town, which in turn means they can develop a robust understanding of their patients' ongoing health needs.

"A range of initiatives including the Forward to Fellowship program has significantly boosted access to medical services in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and Kambalda," Ms Duncan.

"It is now much easier for people in Kalgoorlie-Boulder to see a general practitioner, which is an excellent outcome for the local community, and in turn has seen a fifty per cent reduction in the number of emergency presentations at Kalgoorlie Health Campus.

"This is a great outcome for the doctors, the local medical system and for patients," she said.

Rural Health West Chief Executive Officer Tim Shackleton said that continuity of care is extremely important for patients and leads to better health outcomes for communities.

"By supporting our overseas trained doctors we are helping to create a sustainable and stable workforce, which will mean that patients can have a lasting relationship with their doctor," he said.

"A recent evaluation of the program has elicited significant positive feedback from the doctors involved in the Forward to Fellowship program to date.

“They particularly value having access to a mentor to provide direction, motivation and support while preparing for exams,” he said.

Forward to Fellowship is a true community-led response to support International Medical Graduates in the region. It is supported by the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Chamber of Minerals and Energy, Goldfields Esperance GP Network, the Shire of Coolgardie, WA Country Health Service, Western Australian General Practice Education and Training, and the Goldfields Esperance Development Commission, Nationals WA and Rural Health West.

The recent Government funding will ensure the program continues to make a lasting contribution to creating a stable and sustainable medical workforce in the region.

ENDS

Media enquiries:

Kerida Hodge, Rural Health West, Manager Marketing and Communications
08 6389 4500