



Indigenous healthcare heroes among winners at National Rural and Remote Health Awards

Giovanni Torre November 7, 2024



NEWS

Winners of the Rural & Remote Health Innovator of the Year Award: Yarning up After Stroke, Hunter NewEngland Local Health District, NSW. Image: National Rural & Remote Health Awards.

Almost 200 rural health professionals and distinguished guests from across Australia gathered at the National Press Club in Canberra on Wednesday night for the second annual National Rural and Remote Health Awards, which honour professionals and organisations who have significantly contributed to improving healthcare in the bush.

The awards were conceived by Rural Health Pro and are supported by Rural Doctors Network (RDN), as part of a commitment to promoting and supporting health care professionals who serve remote and rural communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, with Indigenous nominees and winners strongly represented on the night.

Governor General Sam Mostyn joined the event to witness the exceptional efforts of health professionals from rural and remote areas of every state and territory being celebrated.

"Healthcare is so much more than just about treatment. It is education, it's prevention and management, it's project planning and execution, it's communication and collaboration, innovation and so much more," the Governor-General told the attendees while addressing finalists.

"Yours are not just jobs, but vocations of care. Your work is essential to the wellbeing of all Australians and the prosperity and progress of our nation."

Rural Health Pro Manager, Jessica Rostas, said she was "blown away" by the "incredible calibre of nominees" for the ten Award categories.

"We had nominations coming in from WA to Norfolk Island, and from Tasmania to the Top End, via the desert country of central Australia", she said.

"Congratulations to all our winners who have showcased unwavering dedication to keeping local communities healthy.

"It is my hope that our winners' stories will inspire future generations to consider pursuing careers in this vital field and raise awareness of the many rewarding benefits of working in rural health."

Rural Doctors Network chief executive, Dr Richard Colbran, said the awards are a testament to the commitment and resourcefulness of people and organisations who address the unique health challenges faced by rural and remote communities.

"It's a privilege to bring these exceptional healthcare professionals, teams and organisations to a national stage, where their dedication and

achievements can be celebrated," Dr Colbran said.

"Rural Health Pro's National Rural and Remote Health Awards are an important reminder of the need to continue supporting rural healthcare workers, whose efforts often go unrecognised but are critical to the survival and prosperity of Australia's rural and remote communities," he said.

National Rural Health Commissioner, Professor Jenny May AM, said "as a doctor working in rural all my life, I am constantly heartened and affirmed by the clinical excellence and patient-centredness that so many of the awardees tonight display".

"I particularly want to give a shout out to people who work in remote communities."

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The 2024 National Rural and Remote Health Award winners:

- Dedication to Health in a Remote Location: North West Hospital and Health Service Allied Health Hybrid Elective Orthopaedic Model of Care, QLD
- Excellence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healthcare: Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation, NT
- Excellence in Rural/Remote Health Administration: Donna Ah Chee - Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation, NT
- Rising Star in Rural/Remote Health: Casey Shorter - Macksville Medical Centre, NSW
- Rural/Remote Aged or Disability Carer of the Year: Yaandina Aged & Community Care - Yaandina Community Services, WA
- Rural/Remote Health Advocate of the Year: Professor Jane Mills - La Trobe Rural Health School, VIC

- Rural/Remote Health Employer of the Year: Royal Flying Doctor Service South Eastern Section -

NSW/ACT

- Rural/Remote Health Innovator of the Year: Yarning up After Stroke - Hunter NewEngland Local

Health District, NSW

- Rural/Remote Health Professional of the Year: Dr Vaibhav Garg - Royal Flying Doctor Service, SA/NT

- Rural/Remote Multidisciplinary Health Collaboration of the Year: Southern NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying Program - Southern NSW Local Health District, NSW

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