

JustHealth Consultants is the consultancy service of AHHA, launched to support Australian healthcare organisations at national, state, regional hospital and community levels across all sectors to meet complex governance and organisational requirements of today's healthcare system.

SERVICE EXAMPLE:

ALLIED HEALTH RURAL GENERALIST ACCREDITATION

Client	Allied Health Professions' Office of Queensland, Queensland Government
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Services	To develop an accreditation system for rural generalist education and training for the allied health professions in Australia.
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Context Allied health professionals are integral to the delivery of high quality multi-professional services that address the health needs of rural and remote communities. However, there are known challenges to small allied health workforces delivering services to widely dispersed populations.

The concept for a national Allied Health Rural Generalist (AHRG) Pathway has been advancing since 2013. It is a workforce and service development initiative pursued through a cross-jurisdictional collaboration that includes state and territory health services from across Australia.

Health service partners involved in developing the AHRG Pathway identified the need to have a benchmark for rural generalist education and training programs. A common understanding of the capabilities and competencies developed in rural generalist education and training programs was needed to allow health services to integrate the qualification into industrial instruments, employment models and business/commissioning processes.

AHHA was engaged to develop:

- Accreditation standards for education programs providing post-graduate training in rural generalist practice for the occupational therapy, pharmacy, nutrition & dietetics, podiatry, physiotherapy, speech pathology and radiography professions.
 - A comprehensive description and supporting resources that will facilitate the implementation of a governance body that is responsible for the standards and for administering the accreditation process.
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Approach

AHHA established a team with significant experience, credibility and expertise in health professional education accreditation, quality assurance and governance, and an extensive track record in managing and leading engagement and consultation with stakeholders across multidisciplinary teams, services and sectors.

An environmental scan and desktop review underpinned the project, drawing on existing profession-specific and inter-professional frameworks, and outcomes from previous stages of the rural generalist strategy.

Broad and comprehensive stakeholder consultation was conducted. Across seven professions, stakeholders included professional associations, accreditation entities; peak bodies across the professional, education, rural and remote health and community/consumer sectors; health services; government; and Heads of schools. Consultation was facilitated through interviews (via teleconference and face-to-face), face-to-face and web-enabled workshops, and distribution of a discussion paper to facilitate written feedback.

Result

Complementary and inter-linked resources were developed to support the proposed accreditation system include:

1. Competency Framework for rural generalist practice in the allied health professions
2. Program Accreditation Standards and Evidence Guide
3. Program Accreditation Handbook
4. Governance and business model resources to establish a new entity to implement the accreditation system.

The report and resources developed can be accessed at

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ahwac/html/rural-remote>

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