

Taking heart from our successes: moving on to 2013

Jenny May¹

¹National Rural Health Alliance

Jenny May is a practising GP in Tamworth northern NSW.

In her university role with the UDRH/Rural Clinical school in Tamworth for the University of Newcastle Dr May provides teaching and research supports for GPs, GP registrars and undergraduate medical and allied health students. She is also a mentor in the PHCRED program. Her primary research interest is in general practice workforce and this forms the basis of her doctoral studies.

Dr May is the current Chair of the National Rural Health Alliance and is the RDAA representative on the Alliance Council.

Well, what a great way to bring this fabulous few days towards a final closure, and thank you particularly for that final message which, for me, I really walk away with, and thank them for their fabulous efforts. Well, I've got the honour of just recognising a few people that really made this happen and, as I said, bringing is—I guess we look towards the future about where the next steps are.

But first of all we need to thank our conference sponsors, the WA Department of Health, beyondblue, Silver Chain, HESTA for that wonderful dinner, Lottery West, Heart Foundation WA, Australian Indigenous HealthinfoNet, ANU National Institute of Rural and Regional Australia, the Perth Convention Bureau, the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre—and what a convention centre it is—and the Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation, and Air North. So thank you, because you've enabled us to have the fantastic time that we've had.

And I think we have to say a big thanks to the One Vision team, I can see Frank and Peter and Dave up there. Thank you to the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre AV staff who work here as well, I think the AV and the whole IT side of it has been outstanding. So thank you, guys.

Now, I think we need to get James up here, don't you? I don't think we could have hoped for a better MC, to be honest. James, the enormous skill and integrity that you've got—I mean, you're an ornament not only to the rural health sector but particularly to WA, and I think we're all jealous that he's not in our States. So thank you for your effort, it's really appreciated. Thank you.

Now, I think I need to get hold of two Gordons and a Leanne, don't you think. Can I have two Gordons and a Leanne, please? And where's Leanne? Good. We are a hard-working sector, and we understand hard work. But you really need to imagine the hard work that these guys have done to bring this to fruition. And the hard work started as soon as the last conference finished. These guys have been working throughout the last two years just tirelessly and, look, I couldn't ask you to meet a nicer bunch of people in order to do that work. Gordon Stacey has done all the WA connecting over here and has been an absolutely fabulous conference convenor. And, as I said, Gordon and Leanne, what a team—what a team—what an ornament to rural health, so thank you, guys.

These guys are the front people and part of the workers. But there is, as you know, a huge workforce in terms of the Alliance Council and in terms of the Alliance staff, and you can be assured that I will personally thank all of them on your behalf over the next few days, so thank you.

And thank you guys for coming and making it such a festival and the time that it's been. And what are we going to take out of it? What are we going to take home? Well, I think—remember I said at the beginning I wanted us to think on a national level and then I wanted us to think about it on a local level? I think that's about lessons learnt, isn't it?

So remember back to my three Es? I think I've learnt a lot about Efficiency, and I've certainly been challenged to think about the efficiency of the model of care that I provide. And there's also been a lot of discussion about Effectiveness, and I think we all will carry away the message—a renewed focus on preventive health and an absolutely new understanding about arts in health and I think that was so ably demonstrated. There are so

many projects. But to see the Western Desert Kidney Project animations and artwork that was shown on stage I thought was just mind-blowing. And the fact that they're freely available on YouTube I think says something about those guys' testament to what they're doing.

And then there was the concept of Equity and Equality, wasn't there, which, thankfully, was much more better defined thanks to Dr Tom Calma and five metres of rope. And, as I said, it's been fun as well. There's been a chance to really catch up with people, to be heard by others, and to discuss with others plans and ideas as we go forward.

So, as we close this conference and start planning to the future, we hope and expect that we'll see you soon, but that we'll see you in 2013, and where is it going to be?

[Followed by video footage announcing Adelaide as the destination of the 12th National Rural Health Conference.]