

Teaching excellence

AUSTRALIA'S only agricultural health and medicine postgraduate course is on a roll after being awarded the prestigious Deakin University's Vice Chancellor's Award for teaching excellence in 2014.

National Centre for Farmer Health director Sue Brumby said more than 100 people had completed the Graduate Certificate of Agricultural Health and Medicine, a groundbreaking course in agricultural health, wellbeing and safety.

"This is the ultimate win-win opportunity for medical and health professionals," Ms Brumby said.

"It gives these key community influencers incredible insights into the extraordinary challenges faced by people in regional and rural Australia.

"The course benefits people by giving them access to dedicated professionals providing new skills to comprehend and help manage medical issues, as well as overall wellbeing for the whole family."

Ms Brumby said there were only a few places left in the 2015 intake.

She is calling on all people across the range of professions who work closely with regional and rural communities to encourage staff members with a passion for, and interest in, rural health and injuries to attend.

"They will increase their skills and knowledge with the innovative course," she said.

"Alternatively, if you have any staff currently undertaking postgraduate studies, such as diabetes education, masters of nursing, social work, critical care or midwifery, our core unit ... Ag Health and Medicine HMF701 ... can be taken as an elective."

Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine fellowship trainee Dr Christel Smit Kroner said the course helped her gain a deeper understanding of the work and lifestyle factors impacting on patient population.

"I feel more confident to open up conversations with farmers about their daily work, stresses, worries and joys," Dr Smit Kroner said.

Alice Springs based 2013 scholarship recipient and clinical nurse specialist, Mathew Pigrim said he was excited to find a course that combined his knowledge and skills from nursing with his interests in the agricultural industry.

"It also provided me with a solid postgraduate qualification," Mr Pigrim said.

Enrolments are open for the course now through Deakin University.