



NATIONAL CENTRE FOR
**FARMER
HEALTH**

Beyond the fence line: a professional development pilot to inspire change

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Rural Health

- Discipline of Rural Health—the interdisciplinary study of health and health care delivery in rural environments
- Well-recognised discipline delivered Rural Clinical Schools, University Departments, Schools of Rural Health
- Supported with numerous academic journals
- Within rural populations, farm men, women, agricultural workers also live and work

Agriculture and Farmers

- Predominately family owned and operated⁶
- Responsible for 61% of Australia's land mass⁶
- Contribute \$43.1billion (farm gate) to Australian economy⁶
- Remains one of the most dangerous industries in Australia⁷
- Compounding injury rates are poor physical and mental health indicators
- Oldest workforce in Australia⁸

Flow on effect of poor farmer health⁹

FARMER HEALTH

Injury

Illness

Disability

Farmer impact

- › loss of income
- › pain and suffering
- › health cost



Family impact

- › carers role
- › increased farm work for partners and children



Farm impact

- › loss of key labour
- › animal welfare risk
- › OH&S risk



Community impact

- › loss to committees
- › loss to industry
- › reduced capacity



Health issues of agricultural populations

- Accidents
- Farm acquired illnesses
 - Zoonoses
- Skin complaints
- Musculoskeletal disorders
- Chemical/pesticide exposures
- Medical emergencies
- Hearing loss
- Depression and suicide
- Stress and anxiety
- Domestic violence
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Respiratory diseases
- Cardiovascular disease
- Cancers - some
- Diabetes

Compounded by reduced access to health services and cultural barriers

Agricultural Health and Medicine Education

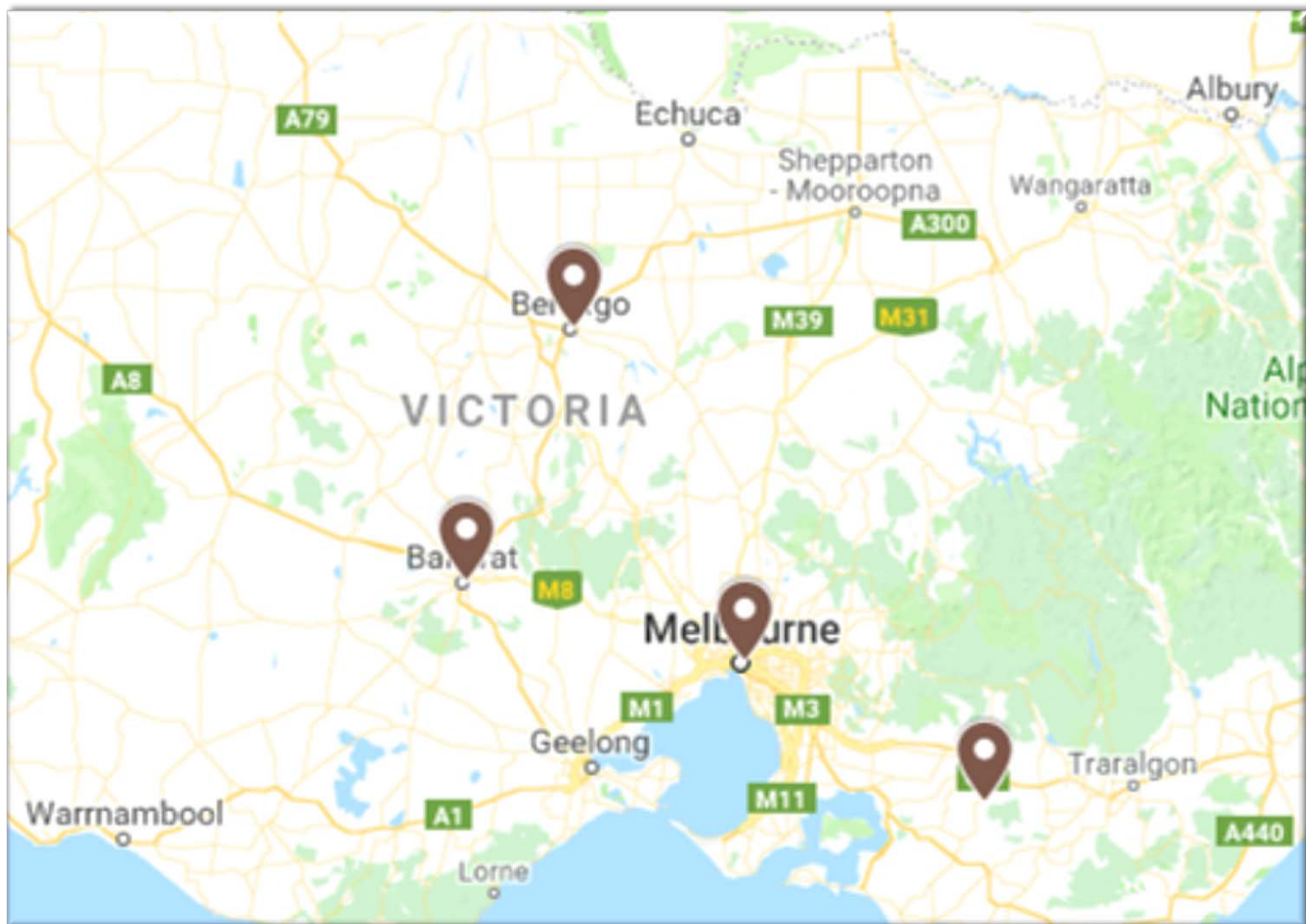
- Few formal programs globally focus on Agricultural Health and Medicine (AH&M).
- Specialty postgraduate unit developed in 2010.
- Curriculum designed to enable health care providers to deal more efficaciously with particular conditions which farmers, as distinct from other rural people, present.
- Support agricultural professionals (agronomists, agricultural extension officers, veterinary surgeons) to play a role in preventing occupational illness and injury through increased health literacy.

Beyond the fence line: Linking policy with communities

- Rural policy is often developed in isolation of the target communities
- Urban and rural policy are not always interchangeable
- The system needs recognition
- Multi department approach
 - Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
 - Department of Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR)

Building on partnerships

- 1-2 day course developed in consultation between NCFH, DHHS and DEDJTR
- Delivered across 4 Victorian locations
 - Melbourne (CBD)
 - Bendigo
 - Ballarat
 - Ellinbank
- Worksafe, Lifeline & South Gippsland Shire Council also invited



Program Design

- Modified Post-Graduate level training
- Specifically designed to accommodate staff schedules
- Regional program – 1.5 days
- Metropolitan program – 1 day
- 3 key topic areas
 - Setting the scene
 - Risks in Agricultural Settings
 - Rural Health – Risk factors and mental health
- Farm tour in regional areas – Day 2







Program Evaluation

- Sessions evaluated using a Likert scale (1-7)
- Sessions achieved mean scores 5.9-6
- 98% of respondents would recommend the workshop to their friends/family

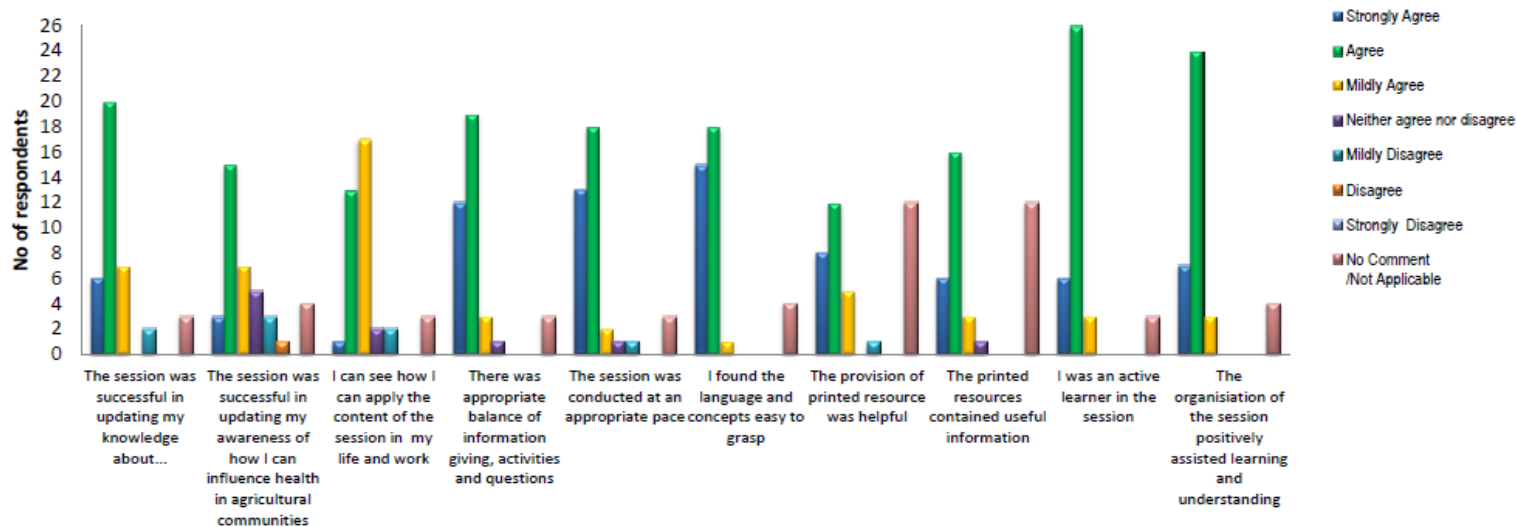
Session	Overall mean score	Mean range
Setting the Scene	6.0	5.07 – 6.40
Risks in Agricultural Settings	5.9	5.14 – 6.16
Rural Health	6.0	5.24 – 6.27
Farm Tour	6.0	5.32 – 6.44

FARM TOUR

Participant Numbers: 44 *Melbourne group did not attend the farm tour

Evaluations Completed: 38

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Mildly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mildly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Comment /Not Applicable	Mean Score
The session was successful in updating my knowledge about...	6	20	7	0	2	0	0	3	5.92
The session was successful in updating my awareness of how I can influence health in agricultural communities	3	15	7	5	3	1	0	4	5.32
I can see how I can apply the content of the session in my life and work	1	13	17	2	2	0	0	3	5.48
There was appropriate balance of information giving, activities and questions	12	19	3	1	0	0	0	3	6.30
The session was conducted at an appropriate pace	13	18	2	1	1	0	0	3	6.18
I found the language and concepts easy to grasp	15	18	1	0	0	0	0	4	6.44
The provision of printed resource was helpful	8	12	5	0	1	0	0	12	6.15
The printed resources contained useful information	6	16	3	1	0	0	0	12	6.17
I was an active learner in the session	6	26	3	0	0	0	0	3	5.94
The organisation of the session positively assisted learning and understanding	7	24	3	0	0	0	0	4	6.11



Overall
Session
Mean
6.0
out of 7.0

Compiled by Tracey Hatherell - 22/11/2017

Key Outcomes

1. 98% of participants would recommend the training
2. Rural and regional policy development requires contextual understanding of rural populations
3. Pilot demonstrates a repeatable and adaptable education program that has increased the understanding of the cultural context of health, wellbeing and safety in farming communities.

Thank you to our partners



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Jobs, Transport
and Resources



Health
and Human
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Thank you

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