

Support Needs of Allied Health Students on Rural Placement

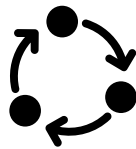
For an allied health student on rural placement, support could be provided by...



...Being flexible

Flexibility amongst team structure, with **multiple clinicians** from the **same profession or other professions** providing learning opportunities and feedback to students, can overcome staffing challenges.

If the student is the **only student** from their profession at your workplace, it can increase the **perceived performance pressure** on the student. Consider facilitating supervision or feedback for the student from another junior staff member who might be perceived as a 'near peer'.



...Being adaptive to each student

Consider **adjusting** the support provided to the student, to cater for the **rural generalist caseload** and for the **psychosocial challenges** of rural practice.

Students who have **not lived rurally** may require **additional support**, especially if they are **unfamiliar** with being **geographically isolated** from known supports.



...Being bespoke to rural practice

Students may be challenged by the **breadth** of rural practice that is then additionally compounded by the **complexity** of clients who may typically receive specialist care in metropolitan locations.

Students may also need support if they experience an **expectation-reality gap** on arrival to rural placement as students might feel that they are expected to either **sink-or-swim**. Emphasising to students that they are '**not expected to know everything**' may alleviate this.

Finally, students may need discipline specific guidance to **adapt their care** to the **unique rural culture** and needs of rural people (e.g., challenges associated with seasonal weather changes, agricultural occupations, limited access to healthcare, belief systems associated with stoicism).