



THE HON WARREN SNOWDON MP
Minister for Indigenous Health, Rural and Regional Health
and Regional Services Delivery

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**Giving Rural Obstetricians and Anaesthetists
a Well Earned Rest**

Rural anaesthetists will now join with outback obstetricians, both specialist and GP, in accessing Rudd Government subsidised locum support.

Minister for Indigenous Health, Rural and Regional Health and Regional Services Delivery, Warren Snowdon, today announced the start of the General Practitioner Anaesthetist Locum Scheme for the rural and remote GP anaesthetist workforce.

“Getting replacement obstetricians and anaesthetists into rural areas to provide locum services stops critical services from closing when regular staff are away,” said Mr Snowdon.

“It also ensures our hard working rural workforce have time for professional development and rest, both of which are vital to providing the best quality of care to country Australians.”

Mr Snowdon said the Government is providing \$6 million over three years to provide locum support to specialist obstetricians, GP obstetricians and now GP anaesthetists.

The ongoing funding to the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists will continue the provision of the Specialist Obstetrician Locum Scheme. The Australian Society of Anaesthetists will provide the GP Anaesthetist Locum Scheme.

The programs link up obstetricians and anaesthetists looking for an outback experience with rural practices needing a locum. The scheme arranges the travel and paperwork and subsidises the locum cost. It is anticipated over 100 locum placements will occur in the year ahead.

“Better locum services encourage the current workforce to maintain services and others to begin a career in rural and regional areas,” Mr Snowdon said.

“Under the Rudd Governments \$134.4 million Rural Health Workforce Strategy, locum support will also be made available for rural GPs, with additional incentives for urban GPs to undertake a period of locum service.

“In addition as part of the \$120.5 million Maternity Services Reform package, the Rudd Government is increasing the range of antenatal and postnatal care options for rural women and their babies by expanding the Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program. Commencing in 2010-11, the new multi-disciplinary maternity service teams will comprise obstetricians and/or registered midwives, registered maternal and child health nurses and/or allied health professionals.

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