



**Australian Government**

**Department of Health**

## **RHMT PROGRAM EVALUATION – EXPERT REFERENCE GROUP**

### **SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES JULY 2019**

- The Expert Reference Group guiding the evaluation of the Rural Health Multidisciplinary Training (RHMT) Program met for the first time on Monday 8 July 2019 in Canberra.
- This enabled the national evaluators – Kristine Battye Consulting (KBC Australia) – to hear first-hand from experts from around the country
- The evaluators presented the draft evaluation plan at the meeting, and discussed the proposed consultation methodology with members.
- Members had a fruitful discussion regarding the proposed list of site visits during the consultation phase, with agreement that the list would be expanded to ensure appropriate geographic coverage and diversity.
- Members acknowledged the complexity of the health workforce environment, particularly with respect to the alignment between policy and program settings at the Commonwealth, jurisdictional, and local levels.
- The evaluators were encouraged to consider the impacts of the broader workforce environment and communities when undertaking the evaluation.
- The meeting generated a constructive dialogue around the availability of data for measuring the health workforce outcomes resulting from the investment in the RHMT program. This included a discussion on survey tools and how to capture evidence to inform the evaluation. Members agreed this required further consideration.
- Members noted the difficulty in attributing workforce outcomes to the program, when there are a multitude of other factors contributing to an individual's decision to practise rurally, and when the outcomes are measured years after the RHMT intervention.
- The need for universities to focus on producing the right workforce mix to meet the health service requirements in rural and remote communities was noted.
- The Expert Reference Group will meet via teleconference on 1 August 2019 to further consider the methodology for measuring workforce outcomes.