



2013

Rural Allied Health Scholarship
(RAHUS)
&
Nursing and Allied Health
Scholarship and Support Scheme
(NAHSSS) Undergraduate (Entry-
Level) Scholarship
Completed Scholar Survey Results

The NAHSSS is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health

Survey of Completed Scholars: NAHSSS Allied Health Undergraduate (Entry-Level) Scholarship (2006-2012)

Executive Summary

This report examines whether the financial support provided under the Nursing and Allied Health Scholarship and Support Scheme (NAHSSS) Undergraduate (Entry-Level) Scholarship, formerly known as the Rural Allied Health Undergraduate Scholarship (RAHUS) Scheme, encourages allied health graduates to take up careers in rural and remote Australia.

The aim of the Scheme is to increase the number of students who grew up in rural and remote areas of Australia to enter and complete allied health undergraduate or graduate entry tertiary studies.

The findings in this report have been collected from surveys of completing scholars who were recipients of the Undergraduate (Entry-Level) Scholarship Scheme from 2006 until 2012. Over that period, 685 undergraduate students received a scholarship.

The report finds that 61% of scholars who responded to the survey are now employed in rural and remote areas. Of these, 64% are working in their home state and 22% are working within 100 kilometres of their home town. Most were working in Physiotherapy, followed by Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology, Dietetics and Medical Radiation Science.

Of the 165 responses received, the survey found:

- 61% of allied health graduates are working in rural and remote settings
- 31% are working in a metropolitan area
- 7% who are working in metropolitan areas say they will be returning to a rural area
- 64% are working in their home state or territory
- 34% were employed in a rural hospital setting
- 25% were employed in a community health/welfare facility
- 4% had started their own business

Recommendation

These survey results offer strong evidence of the need for the NAHSSS Undergraduate (Entry-Level) Scholarship to continue into the future, in order to meet Australia's need for a more equitable distribution of allied health professionals nationally, especially in rural and remote Australia.

Background

RAHUS - The Rural Allied Health Undergraduate Scholarship (RAHUS) Scheme commenced in 2006 and was a long term initiative by the Australian Government to increase the number of health professionals in rural and remote areas of Australia. The Scheme was specifically aimed at addressing the shortage of allied health professionals in these areas.

The aim of the Scheme was to increase the number of students who grew up in rural and remote areas of Australia, who enter and complete allied health undergraduate or graduate entry tertiary studies.

As with other similar programs, the Rural Allied Health Undergraduate Scholarship Scheme (RAHUS) relied on research that students from rural and remote areas who enter and complete tertiary studies are more likely to spend part of their graduate careers working in rural and remote areas than are their metropolitan based peers.

NAHSSS - The Australian Government aims to consolidate and build on workforce programs to ensure they better align with, and are able to respond to, the needs of health professionals to train and practise, particularly in clinical areas and locations of particular need.

The Nursing and Allied Health Scholarship and Support Scheme (NAHSSS) is a result of a 2009-2010 Budget measure which consolidates a range of existing programs and promotes access to tertiary education, professional development support and clinical placements for nurses and allied health students and professionals.

Introduction

Information contained in this report has been collected from completing scholars who were recipients of the Undergraduate (Entry-Level) Scholarship Scheme from 2006 until 2012.

At the completion of their scholarship funding scholarship recipients complete an on line survey using Survey Monkey, which forms part of their end of year acquittal requirements.

After completion of their scholarship funding recipients are contacted on a regular basis (at least every 12 months) so that details of their employment, location, or contact details can be checked and updated as required.

As this regular contact was not commenced until 2010, it proved difficult to re connect with scholars who completed in the years 2006 to 2008. This was especially true in following up on female recipients, mainly due to name changes (i.e. marriage).

To further enhance the data collection of completed scholars the following techniques were utilised;

- Professional Associations websites
- Internet
- LinkedIn

Objective

The first objective of this report and the completing scholar survey is to assess if the scholarship funding is meeting its aim of increasing the number of students who grew up in rural and remote areas of Australia, who enter and complete allied health undergraduate or graduate entry tertiary studies. The second objective is to assess if previous research, that students from rural and remote areas who enter and complete tertiary studies are more likely to spend part or all of their graduate careers working in rural and remote areas than are their metropolitan-based peers, is correct.

Completed Scholars from 2006 to 2012	Survey Sample Size	Total Number of Responses Received
428	375	165 (44%)

Of the 165 responses received;

- 101 scholars are currently working in an Australian rural area community rated ASGC-RA 2-5 (2 are currently studying Medicine but are still practising in their Allied Health Profession, Medical Radiation Science and Physiotherapy on a part time basis in a rural area, so they have been included in these figures)
- 51 are working in a metropolitan area.
- 7 are living and working overseas.
- 1 is studying Medicine, and is no longer practicing in their allied health field.

5 indicated that they are currently not employed;

- 3 are continuing studying
- 1 has applied for a position in a rural Hospital,
- and 1 has applied for 2 positions in a rural area of Victoria.

Respondent's details on receipt of Scholarship

Male	22
Female	143

Respondents average age when scholarship was awarded	21
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Home State	Number
ACT	0
NSW	51
NT	2
QLD	24
SA	11
TAS	11
VIC	51
WA	15
TOTAL	165

Home ASGC-RA	Number
2	84
3	67
4	10
5	4
TOTAL	165

Respondent's details on receipt of Scholarship

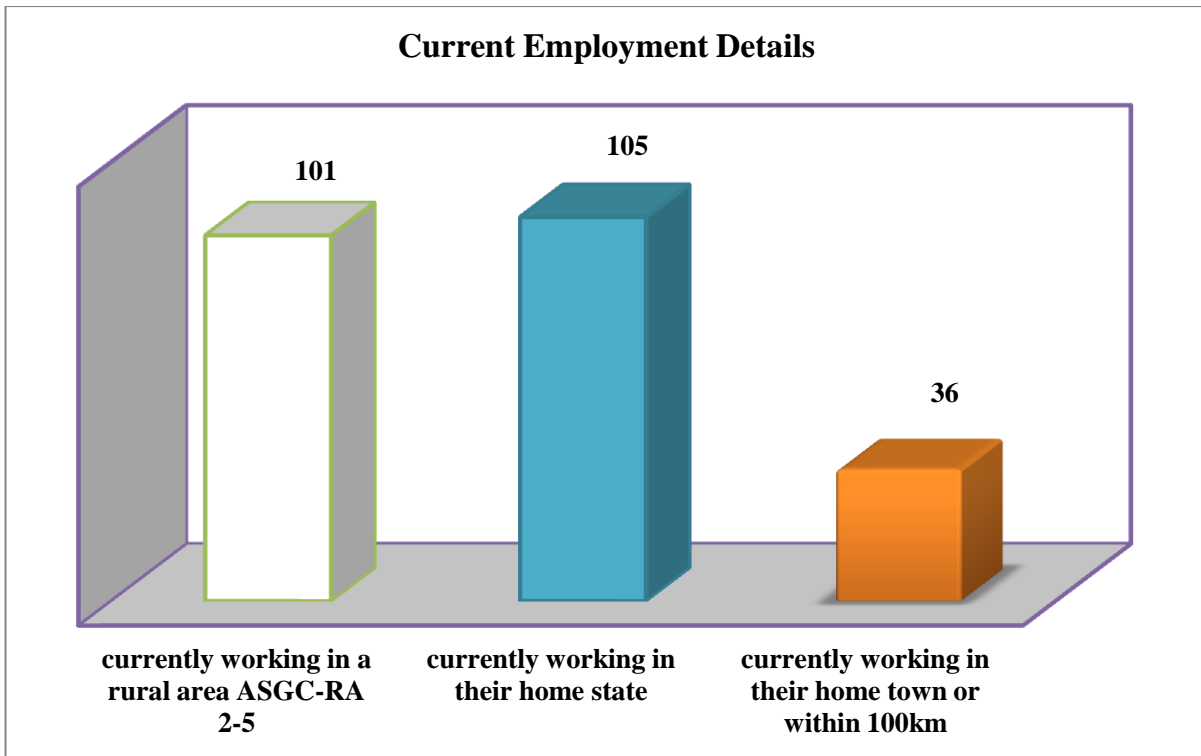
Respondents by Round	Number
Round 1	31
Round 2	16
Round 3	30
Round 4	33
Round 5	23
NAHSSS 1	24
NAHSSS 2	8
TOTAL	165

Respondents by Length of Funding	
1 year	25
2 years	52
3 years	49
4 years	33
5 years	6
TOTAL	165

Respondents by University	Number
Adelaide	2
Batchelor Institute	1
Charles Sturt	35
Curtin	12
Deakin	4
Flinders	7
Griffith	3
James Cook	8
La Trobe	21
Macquarie	1
Melbourne	5
Monash	4
Newcastle	16
Notre Dame	1
Queensland	10
Queensland University of Technology	8
RMIT	5
South Australia	8
Southern Cross	1
Sydney	6
Victoria	1
Western Australia	3
Western Sydney	2
Wollongong	1
TOTAL	165

Discipline	Number
Aboriginal Health Worker	1
Chiropractic	4
Dentistry	12
Diagnostic Radiography	1
Exercise Science	1
Medical Radiation Science	13
Nutrition & Dietetics	14
Occupational Therapy	28
Optometry	1
Oral Health	2
Osteopathy	3
Physiotherapy	42
Podiatry	11
Psychology	1
Social Work	6
Speech Pathology	25
TOTAL	165

Current Employment Statistics of Survey Respondents



101 respondents indicated they are currently working in a rural area classified ASGC-RA 2-5.

105 respondents indicated they are currently working in their home state.

36 respondents indicated they are currently working either in their home town or within 100km radius of their home town.

Current Employment Details by State	Number
ACT	2
NSW	39
NT	4
QLD	25
SA	9
TAS	5
VIC	54
WA	14
Overseas	7
Other	6
TOTAL	165

ASGC-RA of Work Place	Number
1	51
2	60
3	31
4	6
5	4
Overseas	7
Other	6
TOTAL	165

Of the respondents who indicated other;

- 1 advised they are looking for work in the Goulburn Valley, and have applied for several jobs, one at Government Health and another at Kyabram, and is awaiting confirmation of employment.
- 1 advised that they are not practising in the field they were awarded the scholarship for (Physiotherapy) but were completing a Masters of Human Nutrition externally through Deakin University.
- 1 is completing a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in a Speech Pathology (the discipline that they were awarded the scholarship) specific topic. They also advised that they had recently applied to do locum work at Broken Hill Base Hospital.
- 1 is yet to gain employment in Speech Pathology. Has applied for positions around NSW, with a focus on rural NSW. Currently living in Cooks Gap, NSW 2850 while looking for employment.
- 1 respondent is studying full time Speech Pathology.
- And 1 respondent is studying Medicine.

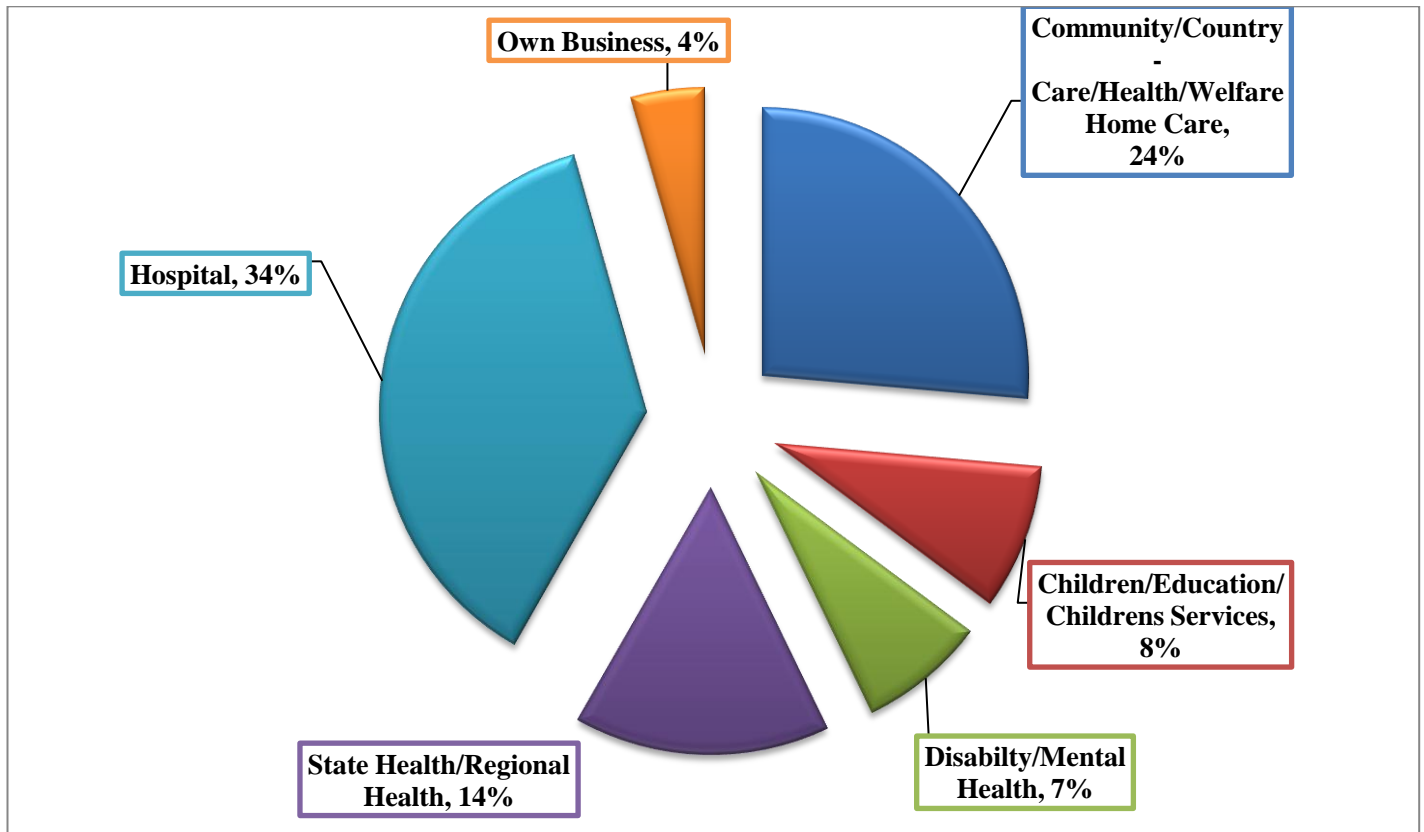
2 respondents have advised they are lecturing at the university at which they completed their allied health course, 1 at Charles Sturt University and 1 at the University of Western Australia.

Public or Private Practice	Number
Did not say	2
Lecturer at university	2
Overseas	7
Private	68
Private/public	6
Public	74
Other	6
TOTAL	165

Areas where respondents found employment

Aboriginal Medical Service
Advisor National Injury Management
Aged Care
Alzheimer's Australia
Aspen Medical (private contractor at RAAF Base)
Cerebral Palsy Alliance
Community: care/health/children's services
Country Health Service
Public Dental Clinic
Disability Services
Education Department
Flying Doctors
Home Care
Hospital
Infant & Child Mental Health Service
Medicare Local
Own Business
Primary School
Public Health Sector
Regional Health
Rehabilitation Centre
Rural Aerial Health Service Community Health
Rural Locum Scheme
South West Healthcare
State Community Mental Health
State Education Early Childhood Development
State Education
State Government Mental Health
State Health
Welfare Service

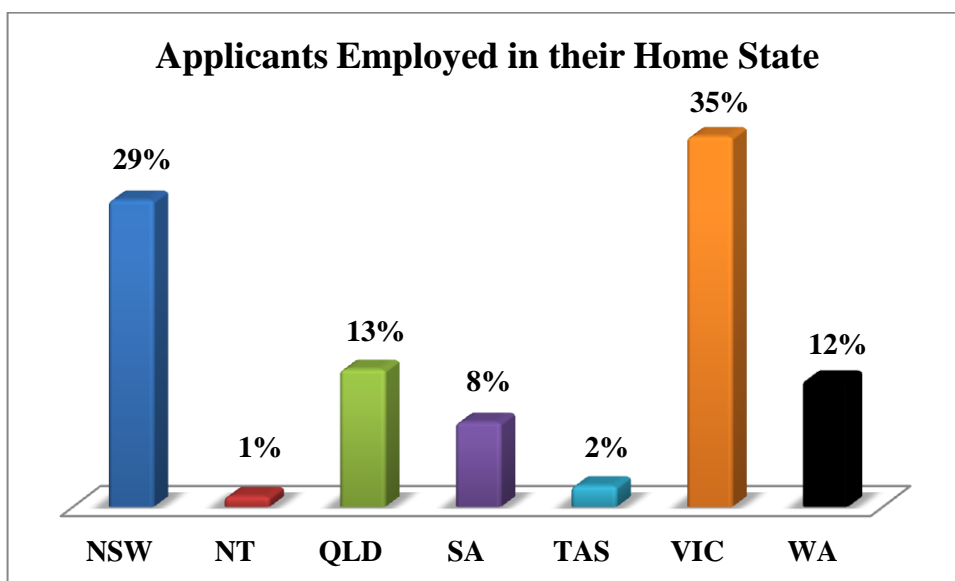
Graph showing respondents who indicated their current employment field



Of the 7 respondents who are currently living and working overseas;

- 1 is in Canada (Ontario) working in a public Osteopathy Clinic in a country town.
- 4 are in England (London and Reading) working in a public Hospital
- 1 is in America (Washington) working in a private Chiropractic Clinic
- 1 is in Vietnam teaching English as a second or Foreign Language

Of the 2 ATSI respondents 1 advised they have commenced a degree in Psychology, but is currently in Vietnam teaching English, and the other respondent is working in a Hospital in a rural community.



Conclusion

The findings of the survey show that the scholarship funding is meeting its objectives with (61%) of past scholarship recipients who responded to the survey currently working in a rural area classified as ASGC-RA 2-5. Of these respondents 64% indicated that they are currently working in their home state (at the time of being a scholarship recipient), and 22% are working within a 100 kilometre radius of their home town.

7% of scholars who are currently working in a metropolitan area indicated they will be returning to a rural area in the near future.

Of the 105 scholars who advised they are working in their home state, 29% of respondents are from NSW and 35% are from Victoria.