

NSW RURAL DOCTORS NETWORK

- Comm Ref/Awds/ Scholsh Programs
CCSM(A)

16 January 2012



Oberon Council
General Manager
Mr Bruce Fitzpatrick
PO Box 84
OBERON NSW 2787

Dear Mr Fitzpatrick

Re: The 2012 Bush Bursary/Country Women's Association Scholarship Scheme

I am writing to invite Oberon Council to consider participating in the scheme in 2012. The Bush Bursaries and CWA Scholarships are offered annually to selected medical students in NSW and the ACT, and are financially supported by the rural shires of country NSW, the Country Women's Association and the NSW Rural Doctors Network (RDN).

If your Shire wishes to participate in the Scheme, RDN will invoice you for \$3,300 (\$3,000 plus GST) which will be provided to the medical student who, in return, will agree to spend two weeks of rural placement in your Shire in the University holidays during the year or over the Christmas break. RDN's role is to administer the scheme, promote the Bush Bursary to medical students in NSW/ACT and to select the successful recipients. RDN matches the successful students with a sponsoring shire council. Each sponsoring shire council nominates a placement coordinator (usually this is someone who works at the council). The placement coordinator is responsible for liaising with the sponsored student and organising the activities included in the placement.

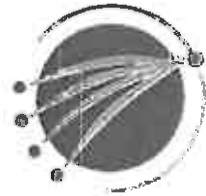
NSW Rural Doctors Network's Role –

- Advertising and promotion of the Bush Bursary Scheme to eligible students studying at medical schools in NSW/ACT
- Recruitment and selection of Bush Bursary recipients
- Administration of funds from sponsoring shire councils to Bush Bursary recipients
- Matching recipients to sponsoring shire council
- Ongoing support and information for recipients and shire councils throughout the year
- Distribution of research and evaluation about the Bush Bursary to stakeholders and interested parties.

□ Head Office Level 3, 133 King Street, Newcastle NSW 2300 Tel (02) 4924 8000 Fax (02) 4924 8010
□ Sydney Office PO Box 1111, Mascot NSW 1460 Tel (02) 8337 8100 Fax (02) 8337 8110
Web www.nswrdn.com.au Email info@nswrdn.com.au ABN 52 081 388 810

NSW Rural Doctors Network

Funded by the Commonwealth Government and the NSW Department of Health



NSW RURAL DOCTORS NETWORK

Sponsoring Shire Council's Role -

- Payment of \$3000 (+GST) for sponsored student
- Nomination of Placement Coordinator from within council or associated organisation
- Organisation of placement for sponsored Bush Bursary student, including liaising with local medical practitioners and community groups, accommodation and social aspects of the two-week placement.
- Liaise with NSW RDN and sponsored Bush Bursary student regarding placement arrangements

The NSW Rural Doctors Network has been working on a longitudinal tracking study of all medical students who have received the Bush Bursary. Since the first BB/CWA scholarships were awarded in 1996, 161 students have benefited. The career choice and practice locations of these students have been tracked by RDN between 1996 and 2006.

All students have enjoyed their placements. They loved being engaged in the community, both professionally and socially. Students from the country enjoyed having the financial freedom to spend time back there as a professional rather than a resident, and those not from the country gained invaluable knowledge and familiarity with rural issues, which is likely to expand their thinking in terms of future career options. This group were much more likely to mention that the scholarship was considered as a 'trial' prior to deciding whether or not to apply to study at a rural clinical school and other rural medical opportunities. Also should be noted that many of the Bush Bursary students are also holders of bonded medical scholarships and places. This means they have been contracted to undertake a number of years in the country after they graduate. It is vital that these students have positive rural experiences while they are studying so that they are able to positively contribute to the medical workforce and the rural communities they serve.

The number of students studying medicine is increasing, with students from the Universities of NSW, Newcastle, Sydney, Wollongong, Western Sydney, Notre Dame, New England and the Australian National University all eligible to apply for a Bush Bursary placement in 2012. There will be increasing numbers of students who will apply for the Bush Bursary, RDN would like to be able to offer as many Bush Bursary places as possible to expose this new generation of future doctors to rural medical practice and lifestyle.

Your financial contribution and support is significant in providing a positive experience of rural health, which is a known contributor to choosing a rural career. The evidence is mounting that this is the case. If you would like any further information about the Bush Bursary scheme or the longitudinal evaluation please feel free to contact me – mlewis@nswrdn.com.au or (02) 8337 8100. Enclosed with this letter is a fax back sponsorship form, if your council would like to participate in the Bush Bursary scheme in 2012 please return the form by Monday the 2nd April 2012. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Melanie Lewis
Project Officer – Education & Training

2012 BUSH BURSARY SPONSORSHIP RESPONSE FORM

Your council is invited to sponsor and host a Bush Bursary Scholarship holder during 2012. Please complete the following details of you wish to participate or alternatively, if you wish to obtain further information please contact Melanie Lewis in the Sydney office of the NSW Rural Doctors Network (02) 8337 8100 or e-mail -- mlewis@nswrdn.com.au

Name of Shire Council:	_____
Name of Town for Rural Placement:	_____
Name of General Manager:	_____
Name of Placement Coordinator:	_____
Job title of Placement Coordinator:	_____
Mailing Address:	_____

E-mail:	_____
Telephone:	_____

Please return this form by Monday the 2nd of April 2012 to:

Melanie Lewis
Project Officer -- Education and Training
PO Box 1111
Mascot NSW 1460
Fax: (02) 8337 8110
Email: mlewis@nswrdn.com.au