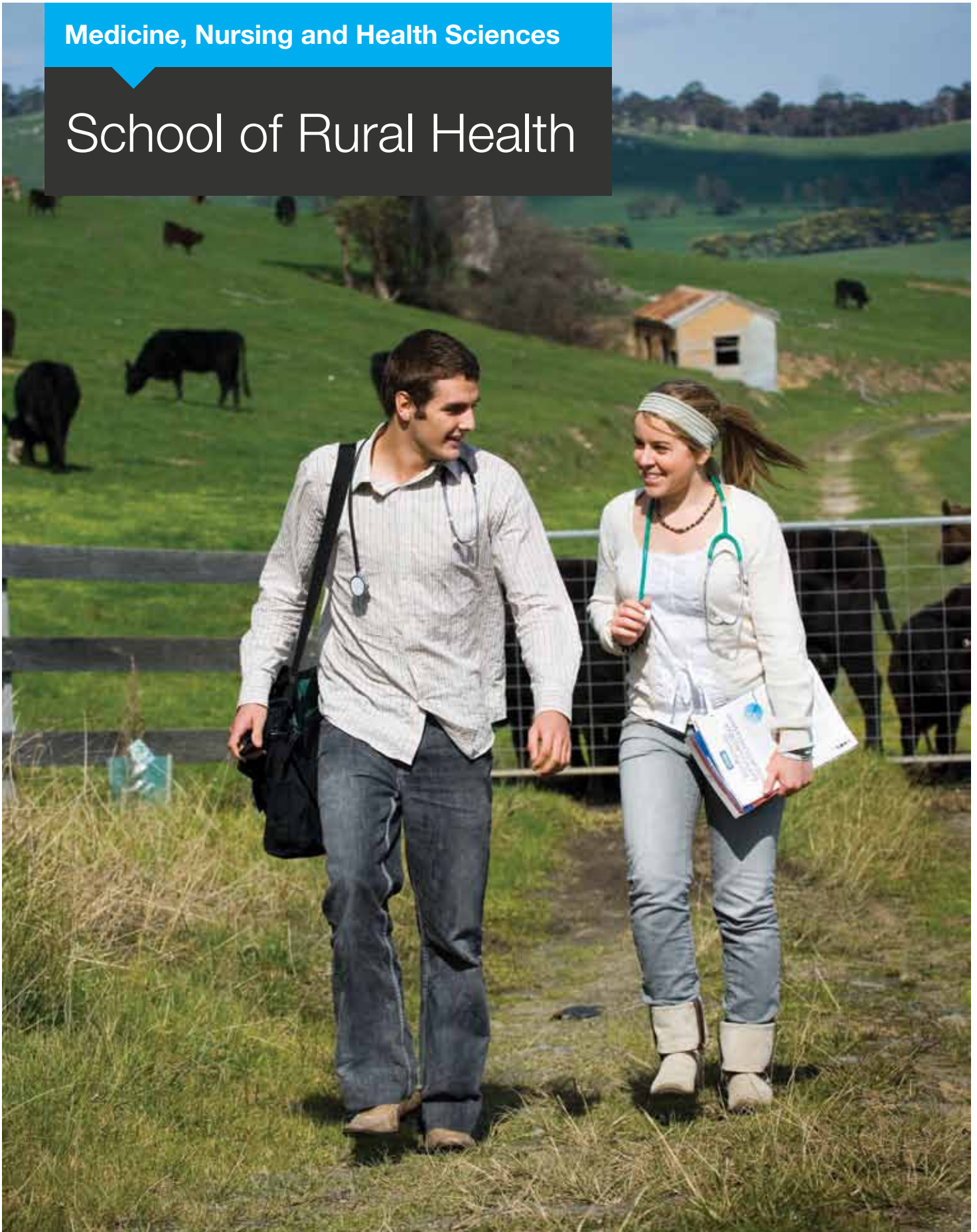




Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

School of Rural Health



Making a difference in rural health

The School of Rural Health is a rapidly growing multi-site School within the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences. The School is committed to improving rural health and developing a sustainable rural health workforce. It seeks to make a difference to rural people and their communities, locally, nationally and internationally through its commitment to excellence in education, research and research training.

The School has a footprint extending across Victoria from Mildura in the west to Bairnsdale in the east. It operates through two distinct hubs: one in the Loddon-Mallee Region in north-west Victoria and one in the Gippsland region in south-east Victoria. The Office of the Head of School provides leadership and direction across the whole School.

The main focus of the School is to provide the rural base for undergraduate medical education programs at Monash University, to support prevocational, vocational training and continuing education for medical and health graduates, to lead and foster a program of rural health research that will improve the health status of rural and Indigenous communities, and to develop innovative interprofessional education and health service models.

The Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

The Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences is the University's largest research faculty. World-class researchers work across disciplines including laboratory-based medical science, applied clinical research, and social and public health research.

It is also home to a number of leading medical and biomedical research institutes and groups, and has contributed to advances in many crucial areas: in vitro fertilisation, obesity research, drug design, cardiovascular physiology, functional genomics, infectious diseases, inflammation, psychology, neurosciences and mental health.

The stature and ambition of the faculty is reflected through membership of the Group of Eight of Australia's leading research universities, and as a foundation member of the M8 Alliance of eminent medical universities and teaching hospitals.

Courses offered by the Faculty include medicine, nursing, radiography and medical imaging, nutrition and dietetics, paramedic studies, biomedical sciences, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, behavioural neuro-sciences and social work. A range of research and coursework postgraduate programs is also offered.

The Faculty takes pride in delivering outstanding education in all courses, in opening students to the possibilities offered by newly discovered knowledge, and in providing a nurturing and caring environment.

The School of Rural Health's vision is for better health outcomes for rural and Indigenous communities and a sustainable rural health workforce through leadership in and integration of consistent and high quality rural health education, training and research programs.

Faculty snapshot

Students and staff

Students (EFTSL – 7,617)

- Undergraduate 6,058 (79.5%)
- Postgraduate coursework 850 (11.2%)
- Higher degree by research 709 (9.3%)

Staff (FTE) – 1,896

- Academic – 1,318
- General – 578

Schools and departments

The Faculty is organised into 11 schools and several institutes:

- School of Biomedical Sciences
- School of Nursing and Midwifery
- School of Psychology and Psychiatry
- Central Clinical School
- School of Primary Health Care
- School of Rural Health
(incorporating Gippsland Medical School)
- Southern Clinical School
- School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine
- Eastern Health Clinical School
- Monash University School of Medicine
(incorporating the Central and Malaysia Medical Schools)
- Harvest Alliance School for Indigenous Health
- Monash Institute of Medical Research
- Australian Regenerative Medicine Institute



An experience unparalleled
by metropolitan training sites

Overview of teaching programs

Medicine (MBBS)

The School is partly funded by the Australian Government's Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) as part of the national rural health workforce strategy.

Additional support for education programs within the regional clinical schools comes from Faculty disbursements and Victorian Government sources.

In 2006, funding was approved for Monash to establish extra Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs) in the MBBS program. This funding involved the establishment of:

- the four-year graduate-entry program at Gippsland Medical School (GMS) based at Monash University's Gippsland campus at Churchill, and
- the Extended Rural Cohort (ERC) of students who undertake most of their clinical placements (three years) in north-west Victoria at Bendigo and Mildura Regional Clinical Schools.

The ERC was developed through the Northern Victoria Regional Medical Education Network which is a joint initiative of Monash University and the University of Melbourne.

In 2011 there were 65 CSPs for GMS and 30 for the ERC at both Monash University and the University of Melbourne. The first cohort of GMS students graduates in 2011, while the first cohort of ERC students graduates in 2012.

Commonwealth funding programs require at least 25 per cent of CSP students to spend a full academic year in a rural placement and all medical students to spend at least four weeks in rural placements. The School of Rural Health has been working steadily to engage with both public and private health services to facilitate clinical placements in rural Victoria.

Units in health science programs

MUDRIH facilitates a range of units at undergraduate and postgraduate level related to health issues in rural communities and has developed an innovative program of student-led interprofessional clinics and placement programs.

Health Professional Education

Overseen by the Clinical Education and Professional Development Unit at Monash University's Clayton campus, the Graduate Certificate in Health Professional Education is delivered by the North West Rural Medical Education Unit over two years in Bendigo and Mildura. The course provides teaching skills for doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, radiographers, social workers, pharmacists and ambulance officers involved in teaching.

Short courses and workshops

Both MUDRIH and the North West Rural Medical Education Unit provide short courses and on-demand workshops to extend the skills of health professionals practising in rural and regional areas.

The research program

The School's rural health research program focuses on understanding better the distribution of major health problems, the specific effect of health service interventions on health outcomes, and how best to provide sustainable services in rural and remote areas of Australia. Research themes include population health/ clinical research, health services and workforce, health education and training, and Indigenous health.

Research grant income is generated through the School's Research Office, the Monash University Department of Rural and Indigenous Health (MUDRIH), and the Gippsland Medical School. External funding from competitive grants has increased significantly over recent years with the strategic consolidation of the research program led by the Office of Research.

Of great significance was the successful grant submission in late 2010 to establish one of Australia's first three Centres of Excellence in Primary Health Care Research worth \$2.5 million for research in accessible and equitable primary health service provision in rural and remote Australia.

This bid was led by the School's Professor of Rural Health Research and Director of the Office of Research, Professor John Humphreys in collaboration with Broken Hill Department of Rural Health (University of Sydney) and the Centre for Remote Health (Flinders University). Dr Matthew McGrail, Research Fellow, Gippsland Medical School is one of five Chief Investigators.

The MBBS program in rural Victoria

Rural medicine offers exciting career and lifestyle opportunities and, through the School of Rural Health, Monash University offers programs for both undergraduate and graduate students to study outside Melbourne. Studying medicine in rural and regional Victoria provides an experience unparalleled by metropolitan training sites. Students enjoy a wide variety of clinical experiences, close contact with senior clinicians and resident medical staff, access to tutors and timetabled tutorial sessions.

Study options

- School leavers can study undergraduate medicine in rural and regional areas based in north-west or south-east Victoria.
- The graduate entry medicine course is based at the Monash Gippsland campus at Churchill.

Undergraduate medicine

School leavers can apply to study in the Extended Rural Cohort stream or the Central stream based at Clayton. The Extended Rural Cohort guarantees extended clinical training placements in north-west Victoria.

Every year a small number of rural/regional placements are made available to other students. Students in the Central stream can apply for rural placements in south-east and north-west Victoria as they become available.

The Extended Rural Cohort

The Extended Rural Cohort (ERC) gives students extended clinical experience in rural and regional north-west Victoria. The curriculum is the same as the standard five-year Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) course. The difference is the location of clinical training.

The first two years are spent at the Clayton campus with other undergraduate medicine students studying basic medical and social sciences. The next two years based in north-west Victoria are dedicated to a mix of clinical training rotations and formal tutoring in hospitals, general practices and other health services. The final year comprises a series of hospital-based rotations.

ERC students spend a minimum of two rotations in Bendigo or Mildura. The remaining rotations can be undertaken in Melbourne or any other location in Australia or overseas which meets the University's requirements.

Graduate medicine

The graduate entry MBBS is a four year course delivered by the Gippsland Medical School. Students spend the first year of the course based at Monash's Churchill campus and later years at various hospital and community placements in Gippsland and metropolitan Melbourne.

The curriculum is designed as an integrated structure incorporating four themes, within which semester long units are taught by staff from a range of departments across the faculty, in an interdisciplinary fashion.

In the first year of the course (year A), the basic medical and behavioural sciences (anatomy, biochemistry, genetics, immunology, microbiology, pathology, pharmacology, physiology, psychology and sociology) are introduced within inter-disciplinary units. In all of these units, there will be a major focus on clinical issues through clinical case studies. Students also participate in community partnership placements where they spend time working in a community setting with clients of welfare agencies. In year B, students study integrated medicine and surgery, which will be taught together with a series of problem based and case-based learning sessions. Year C is largely taken up with core clinical rotations in women's and children's health, general practice and medicine of the mind. The final year of the course is structured as a series of electives and selectives, where students choose to complete their degree by gaining wider experience in chosen disciplines and specific areas of interest through a range of metropolitan, rural and overseas settings.



The School's footprint

The two regions of the School (north-west and south-east) are responsible for equivalent educational and research programs in their respective regions, and work together to achieve the goals of the School across its entire geographical footprint in Victoria.

The north-west region

The north-west region is made up of two regional clinical schools based in Mildura and Bendigo, where the Office of Research is also based. This region is responsible for delivery of the Monash MBBS course through the Northern Victoria Regional Medical Education Network (NVRMEN) model. A joint initiative of Monash University and the University of Melbourne, the NVRMEN model provides extended clinical training for undergraduate medical students in hospitals and community-based placements across north-west Victoria.

Bendigo RCS

Bendigo Regional Clinical School functions as the administrative base for Monash University's Northern Victoria Regional Medical Education Network (NVRMEN) program. It also serves as the hub for educational coordination and administrative support for all our rural GP practices stretching from Gisborne in the south to Swan Hill in the north. At any one time BRCS has 30 students in the first clinical year, 12 students in the second clinical year and 25 students in the third clinical year on the Bendigo campus. BRCS has a small educational unit responsible for staff educational development, curriculum design and evaluation of all educational activities in the North-West region. BRCS also serves as the administrative base for the School's Office of Research and the research node for the North-West region of the School with its complement of research staff and higher degree students.

Mildura RCS

MRCS has direct responsibility for the educational management and support of those students allocated to this site for their clinical education and serves as the hub for coordination of all practices, services and agencies affiliated to the teaching program in Mildura. At any one time MRCS has 12 students in the first clinical year, 8 students in the second clinical year and 10 students in the third clinical year. It also hosts groups of Year 1 and 2 medical students. Amongst its many resources is a very well-appointed clinical simulation centre which provides opportunities for clinical skills education for and between students from different health disciplines. The presence of a large neighbouring Aboriginal community provides special opportunities for educational experiences in these settings.



The south-east region

The south-east region is made up of two regional clinical schools in Central and Eastern Gippsland, based in Traralgon and Warragul, and Sale and Bairnsdale respectively, the Monash University Department of Rural and Indigenous Health (MUDRIH), based in Moe and the graduate-entry Gippsland Medical school, based in Churchill. Together these distributed rural campuses provide rural medical education for a mixed cohort of ± 120 undergraduate and graduate entry medical students, a rural research node for the south-east region and an Indigenous Health Unit centred on the MUDRIH office at Moe.

Gippsland RCS

Gippsland Regional Clinical School is responsible for students placed at its two campuses in Warragul and Traralgon, and community placements in surrounding towns. It offers places to MBBS students from both the graduate-entry Gippsland Medical School and the Central stream of the MBBS.

Medical students spend their first clinical training year in Traralgon at the Latrobe Regional Hospital and at the Warragul Hospital. In their second clinical year students are placed with 15 general practices in central, west and south Gippsland. This is an integrated program teaching General Practice, Medicine of the Mind, Women's Health and Children's Health. The final year pre-internship program can accommodate up to 14 students at any one time undertaking rotations at the hospitals in Traralgon, Warragul or Wonthaggi, in Aged Care, Surgery, Medicine or Emergency Medicine.

East Gippsland RCS

East Gippsland Regional Clinical School also comprises two campuses at Sale and Bairnsdale. It too offers places to MBBS students from both the graduate-entry Gippsland Medical School and the Central stream of the MBBS.

Medical students spend their first clinical training year at Sale in the Central Gippsland Health Centre (Sale hospital). Tutorials are delivered by a range of clinicians including GPs, consultants and hospital medical staff. Pathology tutorials are delivered by Latrobe Regional Health Service and Sale students join others based in Traralgon and Warragul. In their second clinical year, students spend the full academic year based in local community practices studying an integrated curriculum. They rotate through various clinical placements and spend one or two days per week at either the Sale or Bairnsdale campus. Students in their final year can undertake rotations in Surgery, Medicine, Emergency Medicine, General Practice and Radiology in Sale and Bairnsdale.

Gippsland Medical School

The Gippsland Medical School (GMS) is based at Monash University's Churchill campus. It was established after funding was approved in 2006 for Monash to offer 65 extra Commonwealth Supported Places in the MBBS program.

GMS delivers a four-year graduate entry program. The first year (Year A) is primarily based at the Gippsland campus. Subsequent clinical years are taught at various clinical locations in Gippsland and the Mornington Peninsula including Frankston. The School of Rural Health's Gippsland and East Gippsland Regional Clinical Schools take GMS students from Years B, C and D.

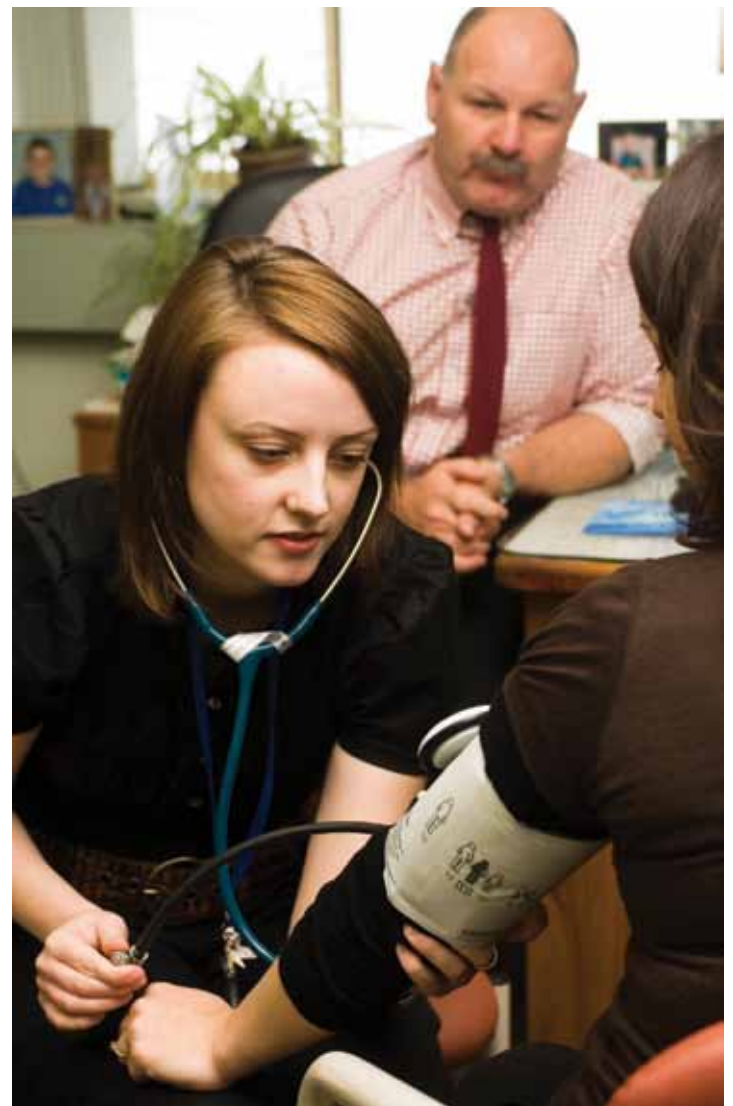
MUDRIH

The Monash University Department of Rural and Indigenous Health (MUDRIH) is funded through the University Department of Rural Health (UDRH) program. MUDRIH is a major research and education program with a special focus on teaching, research and community development in nursing, allied and Indigenous Health.

It is based in Moe and is committed to operating as a multi-site unit through the School of Rural Health regional clinical schools and affiliated rural sites, including their catchment populations. Additional support for programs comes from grant income, postgraduate course work degrees and service teaching within the Faculty.

Office of Head of School

The Office of Head of School is a virtual Office straddling all SRH structures in both regions. The School has a small administrative base on the Monash University campus in Clayton.



Further information

Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences
School of Rural Health

Telephone: +61 3 9905 3091
Fax: +61 3 9905 8012
Email: rural.health@monash.edu



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