



Rural Generalist Anaesthesia Registrar tells us how satisfying and enriching the life of a rural GP can be....

Born and bred close to the big smoke in the Barossa Valley, Tyson was 'bitten by the rural bug early' by a clinical placement in Whyalla as a 5th year medical student through the Spencer Gulf Rural Health School and later undertook a John Flynn Placement Program in Broome. It was highly appealing for Tyson to be able to choose his own adventure in rural and the diversity of training pathways in Rural Generalism gave him the perfect chance to pursue his career ambitions and evolve his skillsets. Opting for the lesser-known path provided Tyson greater opportunity for growth and development than in an urban setting.

Dr Tyson Whitelaw

Tyson shares the incredible experiences he has had training in rural communities and the constant exposure throughout his pre-vocational and professional life.

On completion of his prevocational medical and education training in metro South Australia, Tyson applied for Rural Generalist training in Cairns, Far North Queensland with the lifestyle and medical exposure in Tully being where his rural journey really began before returning to South Australia.

One of the best times of his life was working in Tumby Bay undertaking his core generalist training with Tyson describing it as such an incredible training post. With a diverse range of medical specialties, every day was different and training in hospital and primary care he said you have no idea what was going to come through the door next.



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Dr Whitelaw enjoyed combining Emergency Care, Palliative Care, and Inpatient and Outpatient work saying:

“Working in rural, the presentations are unique and require the ability to think on your feet.”

Tyson has consistently risen to the challenge and become more resourceful and able to rely on his clinical instincts... becoming a true Rural Generalist.

“It’s the best job in medicine! Breadth, depth, sustainability, and genuine grass roots health interventions.”

Tyson shares that a particularly rewarding part of his training has been the ongoing relationships he has with patients throughout their life journey and navigating the complexities of those patients, some with chronic illnesses. This involves providing acute care, even when sometimes it means having to do things out of his comfort zone. For Dr Whitelaw, the experience of walking through life with his patients has been incredibly enriching and is one of the biggest honours of his career.



Now in his final year with the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), Dr Whitelaw is undertaking a metro blended training program with Flinders Medical Centre carrying out an Advanced Certificate in Rural Generalist Anaesthesia (RGA). This is a yearlong program working as an Anaesthesia Registrar to complete his advanced specialised training in anaesthetics and working towards obtaining Fellowship as a Rural Generalist.

Tyson shares with us that a special part of his current role is:

“The human interaction 10-15 minutes prior to the induction of anaesthesia where the building of rapport genuinely impacts the quality of the induction and emergence.”

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Tyson has thoroughly enjoyed being able to travel all around Australia and meeting a bunch of interesting people along the way. For Tyson, taking the step into rural and remote medicine has given him the chance to really discover our amazing countryside.

In his spare time, Tyson gets stuck into trail running, riding his bike and playing in the local footy team. Joining the Club has helped him to form connections and immerse himself in the local rural community.

Now with a young family, working in regional South Australia is where Tyson feels most at home. On this he says the best thing about living and working in rural is:

“Community integration, without a doubt! Community is one of the key parts of human existence, and vocationally rural generalism provides you with an opportunity.”



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Some words of wisdom from Dr Tyson Whitelaw for medical students and trainees who are thinking about undertaking their medical education and training in rural or becoming a Rural Generalist:

“Think about General Practice and Rural Generalist training...keep an open mind regarding it! At medical school we get constant exposure to subspecialty medicine, very little to primary care and rural generalism. Don’t rush and whatever you do, get the broad experience.”



“Go and see this beautiful country.”

- Dr Tyson Whitelaw

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