

# 2014 Paper / Poster Abstract Form

## 7th Biennial Conference

Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health, James Cook University

# Are You Remotely Interested?



*Inform and influence health workforce, practice and service development policy for remote and rural areas*

**30th July – 1st August, 2014,  
Mount Isa QLD**

**Paper / Poster Abstract title: (17 words max)**

**Fourth Year Psychology Students' Field Experience Pilot**

**Abstract Text: (200 words max – Use headings below)**

### **BACKGROUND**

Practical placements are not a component of accredited undergraduate psychology courses. This then limits the students understanding of the range of roles possible when considering future practice options.

### **AIMS OF STUDY**

The pilot project aimed to (a) expose students to rural and remote contexts (b) a broad range of professional practice experiences and (c) to assess if students could address competencies prescribed by the board in a limited capacity.

### **METHODS**

Fourth year Students from JCU Cairns and Townsville were selected to participate. Two Masters of Clinical Psychology students provided mentoring and two registered supervisors provided overall direction and supervision of students' activities. Students completed Pre and post interviews and questionnaires, log books, reflections on learning, and developed an e-Portfolio of experiences. Follow-up interviews at 12 months were conducted.

### **RESULTS**

Students completed 780 hours of practice-related observation, participation and support. Evaluations showed increase in knowledge and understanding of Community Psychology professional practice and deeper understanding of rural and remote contexts of practice. Students also acquired a deeper understanding of working collaboratively with Aboriginal Australians.

### **CONCLUSIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS**

The pilot project has provided evidence that exposure in the final stages of the Psychology degree has impacted career choices for students following a rural and remote field experience.