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Growing a dental workforce for regional and remote Australia: Tracking the paths of James Cook University's first graduates

Abstract

BACKGROUND

The purpose and vision of the regional dental school at James Cook University (JCU) was presented at the 2010 "Are you remotely interested?" conference. Preliminary data on the preferred destinations and current practice location of the first graduate cohort.

AIMS OF STUDY

To identify the main reason JCU Bachelor of Dental Surgery graduates chose their first practice location and subsequent relocation if applicable.

METHODS

Design and participants: This study invited the first 54 graduates from the JCU Bachelor of Dental Surgery to participate in a survey on completion of their degree. Follow-up through an email survey and phone contact provides additional recent data

Main outcome measures: Graduates' main reason for choosing their graduate location and subsequent relocation in their first practice year (2014). Their current place of practice will be compared with their preferred employment location on completion of the BDS. Any post-graduate training undertaken during the graduate year will also be captured.

RESULTS

Respondents to initial survey (n=54; response rate=100%) reported both personal factors and professional opportunities as the primary drivers for choice of employer and location. The follow-up survey is currently in progress and preliminary findings will be available in August.

CONCLUSION: JCU is making a significant difference to the regional and remote dental workforce.