

30/03/2016

### **Rural health professionals eye opportunity to learn from the best in Albany**

Thirty-six rural health professionals from around the region will come together to extend their knowledge about eye health with a new series of workshops being held in Albany by renowned ophthalmologist and McCusker Director Dr Angus Turner throughout 2016.

The six Ophthalmology 101 workshops, which will kick off on 31 March, will give rural health professionals the unique opportunity to learn directly from a specialist in the field and will support them to better identify eye conditions in their patients.

The workshops have been made possible by a partnership between Rural Health West, Lions Outback Vision and Optometry WA to improve the health of rural, remote and indigenous Western Australians.

Dr Turner said he was very excited to be presenting and training the group of highly-skilled doctors and health professionals in his former hometown of Albany.

“Patients in rural and remote communities rely heavily on their general practitioner as they don’t have easy access to comprehensive eye health care or specialist services,” said Dr Turner.

“These workshops will upskill doctors and optometrists in identifying eye conditions in patients, and also provide information about the range of tele-ophthalmology services which can be accessed by rural patients for treatment.”

Leesa Thomas, Rural Health West Manager for Continuing Professional Development said it was a major coup to work with Dr Turner in delivering this training opportunity to rural doctors.

“Professional education is one of the many ways we support our rural health workforce and the communities they serve,” said Leesa.

“Ophthalmology 101 is a great step forward in addressing the unique challenges of delivering quality specialist eye health care throughout rural Western Australia and a great example of the positive working partnership between Lions Outback Vision, Rural Health West and Optometry WA.

“We’ve had an outstanding response from local health professionals to these workshops,” she said.

Further workshops will be held in April, June, July, September and November at the Rural Clinical School of Western Australia in Albany.

Rural Health West is committed to providing innovative and flexible education opportunities for the rural and remote health workforce through partnerships with other organisations who share a vision to strengthen the health outcomes of rural communities.

## **ENDS**

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*As the leading rural health workforce agency for Western Australia, Rural Health West is a not-for-profit organisation funded by the State and Commonwealth Governments responsible for the recruitment and retention of a highly skilled sustainable health workforce to meet the needs to rural and remote Western Australian communities.*