**Presentation title:**

Advocating, building and integrating: Delivery of mental health care in rural and remote Australia by GPs and RGs with mental health advanced skill training

**Abstract** (max. 300 words):

Introduction:

Delivery of mental health services presents a serious challenge to rural and remote communities Australia wide. Remote access to specialist psychiatric services in these communities has improved in recent years with the advent of tele-health and state and federal government initiatives to improve funding and service delivery. However, access to timely, consistent mental health care by an adequately trained clinician with a broad understanding of the context of that community and the individual, is often difficult.

Objective:

To explore and describe the impact and potential for Rural Generalists and General Practitioners’ with advanced skill training in mental health on delivery of mental health care in rural and remote Australia as a potential solution to these complexities and challenges.

Methods:

Using experience-based case studies from a number of sites across Queensland, the audience will hear how advanced skill mental health trained doctors have historically integrated with mental health services and explore the potential for further extensions of these roles to flexibly suit a variety of contexts and models of service throughout Australia.

Results:

The audience will be presented with a summary of the possible application of GP’s and RG’s with advanced skill training in Mental Health in rural and remote communities of Australia now and into the future and will include an opportunity for interactive feedback by the audience as to their experiences and further suggestions.

Conclusion:

It is proposed that Rural Generalists and General Practitioners with advanced skill training in mental health are ideally placed to flexibly respond to the gaps and challenges in mental health service delivery, act as an advocate for community and provide the vital link between primary, secondary and tertiary level care in Australia’s rural and remote communities into the future.