

# The Victorian Rural Generalist Program (VRGP) State-Wide Evaluation of Rural Generalist Advanced Obstetrics Training:



MURRAY CITY  
COUNTRY COAST  
GP TRAINING

## Insights From Key Informants

Authors: Newton SL<sup>1</sup>, Howard D<sup>1</sup>, Lardelli MN<sup>1</sup>, Slaney G<sup>2</sup>

Affiliations: 1. Murray City Country Coast GP Training, 2. Victorian Rural Generalist Program  
This project is funded by the Victorian Rural Generalist Program through a grant from the Department of Health



VICTORIAN  
RURAL GENERALIST  
PROGRAM

## Introduction

General Practice (GP) trainees progressing through Rural Generalist Advanced Obstetrics (RGO) training in Victoria face barriers unique to rurality. Additionally, available training posts provide a wide variation in access to and quality of training to gain necessary skills, which impacts trainees' ability to meet RANZCOG diploma requirements in the year of training, and ultimately, RGO retention.

## Aims

Identify successful training models via a comprehensive evaluation of Department of Health (DOH) funded RGO training posts in Victoria.

## Methods

- Semi-structured, in-depth interviews conducted with six experts in clinical or operational RGO training in Victoria.
- Key informants recruited through networking and snowballing.

## Results

### RGO Training Models need:

A clear training pathway from recruitment to independent practice

**KI6:** *I think that there needs to be a fostering of nascent interest right back to the medical student and even the high school state... We then enabled a pathway so that it was doable, so that they could see how to get there.*

**KI1:** *...There should be a quarantined spot for them, and it should all be pre-mapped out...this position needs to be held open and the health services to go along with it.*

Ongoing mentorship and support from recruitment to independent practice

**KI5:** *Well, you've got to be a believer in GP obstetrics for a start...And you've got to get the message through to your registrars that we support GP obstetrics and when the GPs phone us about stuff we've got to realise that they're experienced GP obstetricians and treat them with respect.*

**KI4:** *The obstetrician said, 'Hey, there's a need out here, they're looking for post-retirement recruitment, it would be a really great place to go, why don't you consider it.' And he kept on harping on about that until I thought, yeah, maybe it's a good idea.*

A consolidation post

**KI1:** *[Post] was always, at that point in time, highly sought after. It had good teaching. They had the ability to continue on afterwards, consolidate skills...They'd go back a day a week and lend a hand in doing deliveries, that sort of thing. Or they'd go on a weekend roster.*

To instil confidence and competence to practice rurally and independently

**KI4:** *And they would sign off advanced trainees...as competent to do caesars independently when they'd only done like, ten or 20...so how do you expect these trainees to be competent when they're having to do this all by themselves, in the middle of the night, hours away from support?*



## Discussion

Continued development and investment in rural pathways may potentially improve the numbers and skills of Rural Generalist Obstetricians providing maternity services in rural Victoria. Training models addressing barriers at specific posts have been successful; however, recruiting, training, and retaining GPs to RGO remains challenging.