



MEDIA RELEASE

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LOCAL DOCTOR ON THE MOVE

Popular local doctor Sean Das, who works at Gippsland Lakes Community Health in Lakes Entrance, will leave the region with very mixed feelings in August.

Attracted to the area through the Victorian Overseas Trained Doctors Rural Recruitment Scheme (VORRS) five years ago, Dr Das has decided to move closer to Melbourne for social and personal reasons.

“When I came to Victoria I came through here (East Gippsland) and realised what a nice part of the world it is,” he said. “I like Australia and Australians – they are every relaxed and generally very appreciative.”

He doesn't rule out a return to rural practice one day. “I don't know yet how I will go in an urban practice. You never know, I could have a wife and family one day and might come back to somewhere like Lakes Entrance.”

Dr Jane Greacen, Chief Executive Officer of the Rural Workforce Agency, Victoria (RWAV), which administers the VORRS scheme, said Dr Das' contribution to East Gippsland over the last five years has been appreciated greatly by the community.

“Whilst people will be sad to say goodbye to Dr Das, the opportunity provided by this particular Scheme to have a doctor placed in a rural practice for five years, is a valuable contribution to the rural doctor workforce. And hopefully Dr Das will be willing to come back and work here again some day.

Originally from Glasgow in Scotland, Dr Das first came to Australia in 1996 working in Brisbane. He would have stayed then, but the recruitment program was not yet available.

When the opportunity presented itself for him to move permanently, he decided to come to Victoria and settled in Lakes Entrance.

As well as enjoying a different lifestyle, Dr Das also believes the experience has made him a better doctor and one he would recommend to other doctors.

“In Britain there tends to be a lot narrower range of skills required because you tend to just refer patients on,” he said. “You don't have to extend yourself much. Here it is more confronting in some ways because of the range of issues you have to deal with; it makes for more interesting medicine and hopefully helps you become a better doctor as well.”

Dr Das will be working at the Ivanhoe Medical Centre, moving there late in August and is looking forward to some different social opportunities. “I'm still single so it's a chance to broaden my social contacts as well.”

RWAV is working with the health centre to attract another doctor to the area.

About RWAV

RWAV was established in 1998 to overcome the shortage of rural doctors and improve access to medical services for rural Victorians. RWAV's recruitment programs and ongoing support services have been fundamental to increasing rural GP numbers in Victoria.

Today, RWAV is addressing workforce shortages in rural and regional towns. Some of its key priorities include the provision of support services for rural doctors and their families, professional development programs, locum support, marketing of rural general practice, recruitment of rural doctors including specialist outreach services, workforce planning and research to inform government policy.

Further information on RWAV is available on the website at www.rwav.com.au

Media enquiries

Ian Needham

RWAV PR

Ph: 0418 331 683

Email: npr@net-tech.com.au

