



Royal Flying Doctor Service

Strengthening Indigenous health workforce will help Close the Gap

Creating more opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals to develop skills through clinical placements will help foster cultural safety in health care services.

Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia (RFDS) CEO **Martin Laverly** said *“Cultural safety and removal of racism in health care can be achieved by supporting Indigenous health care students and graduates to become the health system leaders of tomorrow.”*

Minister for Indigenous Health, the Hon Ken Wyatt, will today launch a new partnership of the RFDS with the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA), the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM), and Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) to deliver the RFDS Indigenous Health Scholarship Scheme.

RFDS scholarships will support Indigenous students undertaking remote or rural clinical placements in medicine, nursing, midwifery and allied health. Minister Wyatt will announce the first recipients as:

- Ms Amanda Robinson, for medicine;
- Mr Tim Haynes, for medicine;
- Amanda Bailey, for allied health;
- Amy Thompson, for nursing/midwifery;
- Jennifer Mairu, for allied health.

AIDA CEO Craig Dukes said “The RFDS Indigenous health scholarship provides great opportunities for AIDA members to undertake placement in rural and remote areas. On behalf of AIDA I congratulate recipients, Ms Amanda Robinson and Mr Tim Haynes and thank the RFDS for their continued support towards career opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors. This experience for Ms Robinson and Mr Haynes contributes not only towards their own professional development, and to the broader goal we all share to create a culturally safe health care system.”

CATSINaM CEO Janine Mohamed said “We would like to thank the RFDS for the funding to not only assist with the implementation of their Reconciliation Action Plan, but also to help us grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nursing and midwifery professions. The clinical placement experience will afford the students with insight into what it means to live and work in rural and remote Australia, which we hope is a direction they pursue once they graduate.”

IAHA CEO Donna Murray said “The RFDS scholarships will provide much needed support for allied health students to undertake a rural or remote clinical placement which is critical for developing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health workforce. This is also an important step in further supporting locally driven workforce development models that provide culturally safe and responsive allied health services with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.”

Minister Wyatt will launch the scholarship program in the Mural Hall at Parliament House Canberra at 4pm Monday 29 May, where scholarship recipients will be available to speak to media.