**News article - Leadership and Good Practice**

**Developing rural practice education through international connections**

Leadership and Good Practice is one of the four pillars that make up the National Centre for Remote & Rural Health & Care (the Centre’s) work plan. We spoke to Trish Gray, Head of Programme, NHS Education for Scotland (NES), to learn more.

**What can you tell us about the Leadership and Good Practice workstream?**

We have two priority programmes underway for the period 2024-2025. They are International Connections and Primary Care Practice Models

**What does the International Connections programme involve?**

In this programme, we’re actively engaging with national and international colleagues on knowledge exchange and peer learning. It has originated from NES work with the University of Dundee and the [Scottish Advanced Practice Educators Network (SAPEN)](https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/69201).

Collaborating with national and international colleagues through remote and rural networks enables us to keep up to date on global discussions on the development of advanced practice regulation and rural practice education progress.

**Can you give examples of organisations in these networks?**

In the UK we are engaging with the Lincoln Institute of Rural and Coastal Health (University of Lincoln) and the University of South Wales. Overseas, our connections include the governments of New Zealand and Queensland, Australia, and Texas, USA. More recently, we’ve engaged with the University of Melbourne and the University of Western Australia.

The network meets bi-monthly and through these connections we’ve shared our [Rural Advanced Practice Capability Framework.](https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/48411) Similarly, colleagues from Australia have shared [The National Rural and Remote Nursing Generalist Framework 2023-2027](https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-03/the-national-rural-and-remote-nursing-generalist-framework-2023-2027.pdf).

We’ve also discussed undergraduate rural placements with the University of Melbourne and University of Western Australia. A consensus statement is being developed in Australia for the cultural safety of Midwives and initiatives from the recent Wonca conference, which deliberated on reducing violence for female Doctors/Nurses.

We’ve agreed to arrange a series of meetings and link both our international groups together to compare national rural health contexts, the geography, and policy initiatives. We also plan to look at common rural strengths and key challenges.

It’s a great opportunity for NES to collaborate to develop an understanding of quality placements across contexts. Our research team will be supporting us along the way, to look at how we can collaborate for joint research projects and provide evidence for educational initiatives that will support the sustainability of equitable healthcare services in rural Scotland.

**What difference do you think International Connections will make to NES/the Centre’s goals?**

Learning from national/international perspectives through this programme and disseminating knowledge to practitioners in Scotland will help us improve education initiatives for the remote and rural workforce. We want to ensure rural practitioners have equity of access to education in rural communities, to reduce duplication where possible, and contribute to the sustainability of rural healthcare through innovative education and training solutions.

**What successes have you had to date?**

We contributed to the development of the [Euripa Lincoln Statement 2024: Tackling Rural Health Inequity in Europe](https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/76381/national-centre-for-remote-and-rural-health-and-care-information-hub/remote-rural-announcements-and-news/euripa-lincoln-statement-2024-tackling-rural-). The statement, which delegates at the [EURIPA Rural Health Forum’s](https://forum.euripa.org/page/home) closing ceremony in June endorsed, outlines 7 issues which EURIPA will explore in greater detail in the future.

We have also received an invitation to join the recently established Rural Health European Academic Network (RHEAN). This Network will be a working group within EURIPA. It will include clinicians and academics currently working in the fields of rural health research and multidisciplinary education and training for rural health practice.

Trish Gray concluded: “As NES we want to achieve measurable improvements and develop and deliver unique training, education and leadership development programmes. The Centre’s International Connections programme, the peer learning and knowledge exchange are invaluable. They will help us equip remote and rural practitioners to innovate and lead service improvements aligned to the changing needs of their communities.”

For more information visit [International Connections | Turas | Learn](https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/77751)

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