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**Country Health SA Hospital Inc.
Adelaide Office**

Level 12
100 Waymouth Street
Adelaide SA 5000
PO Box 287, Rundle Mall
Adelaide SA 5000
DX 243

Tel 08 8226 6120
Fax 08 8226 7170
ABN 96 157 660 816

www.countryhealthsa.sa.gov.au

Dr Graham Morris
President
Rural Doctors' Association of South Australia Inc.
PO Box 846
CLARE SA 5453

Dear Graham

Further to my letter dated 17 December 2009 and clarifying note dated 18 December 2009, and following the negotiation meeting on 30 December 2009, I am pleased to provide an enhanced offer for your consideration.

I would like to emphasise that Country Health SA sees country GPs as an integral component of the country health system and recognises that the partnership between these doctors and Country Health SA is vital to the health and wellbeing of country communities.

Country Health SA also recognises that GP registrars are part of this partnership. Not only are they important in the provision of health services, but for ensuring the future workforce of country GPs.

The following are the specific elements of the enhanced offer:

1. On-Call Allowances

Country Health SA continues to have the view that the different circumstances in the hospitals across country South Australia, in particular, the volume of activity and the consequential impact on the doctors' ability to work in their own practice, justify differential on-call rates. It is recognised that the original proposal of three tiers may be over complicated. The enhanced offer now proposes two groupings instead of three. One group, which includes the higher activity hospitals, will have an annual on-call roster payment of \$113,600, and the second group, an annual on-call roster of \$95,850. The details are included in the attached South Australian Rural Medical Fee Agreement. The new proposed on-call rates also include compensation for telephone calls, which previously doctors had to separately claim for.

2. Registrars

Registrars are an essential part of the country medical workforce and their primary relationship is with GPs or their practice. The relationship of the GP registrar with Country Health SA will be through their ability to be a nominated medical practitioner. The attached documents have been amended to recognise this and to also provide for payment to registrars for attendance at agreed meetings.

3. Contract of Engagement, South Australian Rural Medical Engagement Responsibilities (SARMER) and South Australian Rural Medical Fee Agreement (SARMFA)

These three documents are attached and each has been updated to include the elements of the enhanced offer, and items which have been discussed and agreed at

previous meetings. The documents also include the items on which further clarification was sought.

It should be noted that there are two items that you may wish to obtain further legal advice on. These two items are:

- a. **Clause 3.5 & Clause 10.2** - Clarification on workers compensation and superannuation.
- b. **Clause 3.12** - This clause has been inserted to prevent a restriction of a medical practitioner to contract to work for Country Health SA when they leave a practice for which they were a nominated medical practitioner.

4. Doctors in Towns without Hospitals

Country Health SA acknowledges that doctors in towns without hospitals are an important part of the health service system in country South Australia. In the past and currently, Country Health SA has recognised the work of these doctors by way of payment of a grant which has been detailed in South Australian Rural Medical Engagement Schedule (SARMES).

Country Health SA wishes to clarify the relationship with these doctors, and although it is not seen as part of the contract for the provision of services to hospitals as per the attached documents, it is recognised that it is important to have the same level detail in the criteria for payment of the grants to these doctors, and the quantum and the towns where these arrangements will apply.

Therefore Country Health SA confirms its commitment to do this work with the Rural Doctors' Association of South Australia and Australian Medical Association (SA) within 3 months.

5. SARMFA Updates (Schedule of Fees)

Currently the schedule of fees is updated once a year on the 1st of January. As part of the enhanced offer, it is proposed to update the document two times per year on the 1st of July and the 1st of December.

As has been the case through the whole process of discussion and negotiation, Country Health SA continues to work diligently and in good faith to reach an agreement with the Rural Doctors' Association of South Australia and Australian Medical Association (SA) in relation to contracts between Country Health SA and country GPs and registrars, the SARMER and the SARMFA.

Country Health SA looks forward to a positive response to this enhanced offer at the next scheduled negotiation meeting on Thursday, 28 January 2010.

Yours sincerely



George Beltchev
Chief Executive Officer

22/01/2010

Enc: Contract of Engagement
South Australian Rural Medical Engagement Responsibilities
South Australian Rural Medical Fee Agreement