

Media release -- Sunday 28 October 2007

## South Australian rural doctor wins Rural Registrar of the Year Award

An outstanding dedication to rural and remote medicine has seen South Australian rural GP registrar, Dr Scott Lewis, awarded the *Westpac RDAA Rural Registrar of the Year Award for 2007* at an awards dinner held last night at the joint Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) and Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) annual conference in Canberra.

RDAA President, Dr Peter Rischbieth, said: "RDAA is delighted to have chosen Scott for this year's award. He is a terrific example of just the type of young doctor the bush is desperately crying out for—he is extremely enthusiastic and committed to providing quality medical care to those living in rural communities, and he has also undertaken additional advanced training in procedural medicine such as anaesthetics and obstetrics at a time when many rural doctors with these important skills are beginning to retire.

"Scott spent some years living in rural towns in his earlier years, and then went on to study medicine in Adelaide. But it was a rural clinical placement in Wudinna (about 6 hours drive from Adelaide on South Australia's Eyre Peninsula) a few years ago that really set his mind on a career as a rural doctor, so much so that when Wudinna's existing doctor retired a few years ago Scott put up his hand to become the next doctor for the town.

"He and the Wudinna community then set about obtaining funding, including through the Federal Government's Rural Medical Infrastructure Fund, to build a new multi-purpose health clinic for the town.

"Scott and his wife Karen will move to Wudinna at the start of 2008, and Scott will be the community's only doctor for a population of approximately 1500 people. In the meantime, he has been working as a rural registrar this year with Dr Tony Lian-Lloyd, the sole doctor in the town of Quorn (4 hours drive from Adelaide) and with the Royal Flying Doctor Service in nearby Port Augusta.

"Tony, who won RDAA's inaugural Rural Doctor of the Year Award in 2005, said that Scott has been a great asset to his practice during the year, and with Scott's anaesthetic skills Tony has been able to continue to provide surgery services in the local region.

"Scott has also been heavily involved in organising annual medical student visits to Quorn, and he has been a very active participant in rural medical politics. He is currently RDAA's Vice President (Education), Registrar Director of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, and RDAA's representative on the management committee of the Rural Doctors Association of South Australia.

"Scott's unfailing commitment to rural medicine and the community of Wudinna makes him a highly deserving recipient of this year's *Westpac RDAA Rural Registrar of the Year Award*."

Graham Jennings, Westpac's Chief Executive, Regional and Agribusiness Banking, said Westpac was proud to support RDAA and its three awards for 2007. "It is a great privilege that Westpac can sponsor these awards, given they recognise the outstanding achievements of dedicated individuals and their commitment to rural and remote health. Westpac values the importance of rural centres, and how services provided by rural doctors are an integral part of country communities. It is imperative that we work together to ensure essential services are made available and retained in regional and rural areas. Westpac looks forward to providing continued support to RDAA, its members and rural communities across Australia."

**Dr Peter Rischbieth and Dr Scott Lewis are available for interview. A photo of Scott is also available.  
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