

BOOK REVIEW

A Textbook of Australian Rural Health

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A Textbook of Australian Rural Health
Siaw-Teng Liaw and Sue Kilpatrick, Editors
Australian Rural Health Education Network
Canberra, ACT; 2008. 293 pages; soft cover
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The visionary Rural Health Strategy of the Commonwealth Government in Australia has been responsible for the setting up of a unique educational and research infrastructure throughout rural and remote Australia in the shape of University Departments of Rural Health and Rural Clinical Schools. This has created a 'community of scholars' in the bush which has placed Australian rural health in a front seat position internationally.

The intention of this book is to be a national resource for all students, educators and professionals who have an interest in rural health or a commitment to working in the rural setting, and there is no doubt that it succeeds in this objective. For those who are devising new ways of grounding undergraduates and postgraduate students in the philosophy and practice of rural health it will be a useful and readable companion.

I particularly liked the introductory chapters by John Wakeman and John Humphreys ('Rural and remote health – definitions, policy and priorities') and Lisa Bourke and Colette Sheridan ('Understanding rural health – key concepts') which provide a sound historical background and a platform for the future of the discipline.

There are case studies and learning activities enhancing each chapter and these will be useful approaches when adapted to local conditions in various parts of the country. The book has very much an Australian flavour and context but it may well be of interest to a wider international audience.

This textbook is a very welcome addition to the now considerable group of books on Australian rural health and should be in the library of every learner wishing to be grounded in rural and remote medicine.

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