

## EDITORIAL

# 2004: The end of the beginning for *Rural and Remote Health*

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A year goes by, and a new year beckons. What a year it has been for *Rural and Remote Health*! More original articles published than ever before, more new authors sharing their work, and more readers registering their support for our vision of a high quality internationally peer-reviewed evidence base for rural and remote health professionals, policy makers, researchers and community members.

Our European Section has established itself under the guidance of Christos Lionis, and increasing numbers of articles from North America are being triaged through the editorial process by Bob Bowman. A growing number of authors from non-English speaking backgrounds are being successfully shepherded through to publication by Jen Richmond, our Production Editor, and our site continues to become more useful under the guidance of our Journal Manager, Jenny Bigelow, and programmer, Emad Hilo. Many of our readers have joined us this year through the successful work of Leah Busby in increasing awareness of our journal across the world.

As important as it is to encourage each other within the RRH 'family', objective external recognition of quality is crucial to our endeavours. In this regard, the decision by the National Libraries of Medicine to accept *Rural and Remote Health* for indexing in MEDLINE has been a very significant milestone in the life of this journal. It is testimony to the importance of this Journal in the international scientific community and to the quality, creativity, passion, integrity, and attention to detail of our authors, reviewers and staff. It will multiply the effectiveness of our message over the next decades.

Just as important has been an even more recent development. *Rural and Remote Health* has hitherto been supported by funding from the Department of Human Services in the Australian state of Victoria. This Department's vision and commitment has enabled free access for authors and readers through the timely and accessible medium of the World Wide Web. It is now time for a home more closely allied to the health professions the Journal serves. From 2005, *Rural*



*and Remote Health* will have a new home, being jointly auspiced by the Australian Rural Health Education Network (ARHEN) and the Federation of Rural Australian Medical Educators (FRAME).

These two organisations together represent the future of academic rural health in Australia, and are both underpinned by funding from the Australian Government to address rural and remote health workforce and health outcome inequalities. Through this strategic collaboration, readers and authors across the world will be able to continue to participate in the Journal at no cost and without the bias that can come from commercial sponsorship. The Journal's website will continue to be hosted by Deakin University as part of its commitment to this collaborative work, so you will not have to adjust your favourite bookmarks!

In many ways, 2004 marks the end of the beginning for *Rural and Remote Health*. Our vision remains a future reality, but we have matured in our capability to achieve this

vision. We cannot do this alone. Our partnership with *Education for Health*, with our planned joint issue being oversubscribed by potential authors by more than 200%, is but one of the many partnerships that need to be developed in our next phase. Our new home is itself a partnership, and one that recognises that global and local approaches to improving the health of rural and remote communities are symbiotic, and those that have the means need to invest alongside those that have the need but lesser means. The first Christmas also marked the end of the beginning in the relationship of the human with the divine. Rather than a time demarcating our differences, may this time of celebration be for us all a beacon of unity, hope and peace, so that together we can successfully meet the challenge of health for all.

**Paul S Worley**  
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