

MEDIA RELEASE

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More psychologists needed in the bush

The Australian Psychological Society has supported the call for improved health services in rural Australia in the hope that the psychological needs of rural communities will be met.

"Rural Australians face many of the same stresses as city-dwellers do," said Amanda Gordon, President of the Australian Psychological Society.

"Rural incomes have been declining for the last few decades, while urban incomes have been rising. Rural families are facing dislocation from loss of farms and industries. While rural communities are usually more supportive, they are themselves struggling with loss of services and the need to face changing and uncertain futures."

"Psychologists are more available in rural communities than may be thought, but still nowhere near enough to meet the psychological needs of rural Australians. We know the sad facts of higher suicide rates, especially amongst rural men," said Gordon.

The Australian Psychological Society has strategies in place now to encourage psychologists to go to work in rural locations. The APS believes that these strategies would be more effective if they were given similar government support to that provided to develop rural medical services.

The APS is the largest professional association for psychologists in Australia, representing more than 15,700 members. The APS is committed to advancing psychology as a discipline and profession. It spreads the message that psychologists make a difference to peoples' lives, through improving psychological knowledge and community wellbeing.

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