



Charles Sturt  
University

School of Rural Medicine  
Faculty of Science and Health

INFORMATION ON OUR  
MEDICAL STUDENTS  
RESEARCH PROGRAM

MAKE A DIFFERENCE



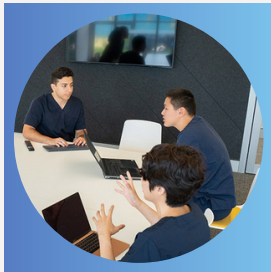
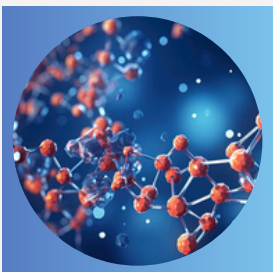
## THE MD PROJECT PROGRAM

Across medical schools in Australia, medical students undertake a program of scholarly research as part of their medical degree. The MD Project is one of the foundations of the Charles Sturt University's School of Rural Medicine (CSU SRM) Doctor of Medicine (MD) 5 - year undergraduate entry medical program. The aim of this project is to expose medical students to research and provide experience, develop their research skills and their ability to critically evaluate research outputs.

Each MD Project must be unique, and students must individually develop, address and report on an original question or project aim that is relevant to the Rural Clinical School (RCS) that they are based at for their clinical years (Yr 3- 5). Our unique footprint, with 9 RCS's, also enables significant "umbrella" projects to be undertaken, spanning multiple locations to address issues that impact all rural communities. Students are allocated a total of 10 weeks to complete their MD Project spread across Year 3 (Jul-Dec) + Year 4.

Have a research idea? Contact us to discuss!

## RURAL HEALTH RESEARCH IMPROVES RURAL HEALTH OUTCOMES



## OUR MD PROJECT MISSION

01

To graduate our students with strong ethical research capability and provide skills relevant to their future careers as medical professionals

02

To provide students the opportunity to work with a supervisor to conduct a hands-on, in-depth investigation of a rural health-related topic

03

To increase the research capacity of the rural workforce by collaborating with research interested rural clinicians

04

To ensure that student learning is maximised by the dedicated SRM MD Research & Evaluation team

05

To become a centre of excellence for rural health research by supporting and collaborating with rural and remote clinicians

## TYPES OF PROJECTS

As a rural medical school, our focus is on rural health research, as we firmly believe rural health research will improve health outcomes for our rural communities.

MD Projects can be developed in one of six areas, any of which must address a local issue within the RCS that each student is based in for Years 3-5.

- Clinical Medicine
- Community Health
- Health Innovations
- Indigenous Health
- Health Education
- Biomedical Sciences



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# MD PROJECT TIMELINE

## YEAR 3

Commencement of clinical placement. Students to engage with local clinical community, and determine areas of need/supervisors of interest. Sourcing of MD project concepts - SRM team will source numerous projects for each RCS. Students can source their own project of interest to them.

One week of allocated MD project time. Students to engage with their MD project as much as desired. Research proposal development and refinement can occur.

3 Weeks MD Project allocation (variable) Data collection & analysis if applicable.

End of full 9 week MD Project allocation:

- Final Report Due
- 3 minute + 1 Question presentations
- Supervisor Assessment due

JAN - MAY

JUNE

Project selection finalised. First joint meeting with student/supervisor/SRM Research Team to discuss project and set expectations and plan.

JULY- DEC

## YEAR 4

JAN - APR

3 weeks MD Project allocation. Detailed project description incorporating a literature review due at the end of week 3.

MAY - JULY

AUG - NOV

3 Weeks MD Project allocation (variable) Data collection & analysis if applicable.

NOV



# INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS & SUPERVISORS

MD Projects may be sourced in one of two ways:

### • Student - Sourced Projects

- Students may self-source projects by April of Year 3 in their subject areas of interest by contacting supervisors directly. Supervisors must be based within the medical community of the local rural clinical school. Students can contact the Research team to discuss proposed projects and next steps.

### • Supervisor - Offered Projects

- Supervisor-offered projects can be developed to address a rural health issue relevant to the local community. They require the completion and submission of the [CSU MD PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM 2024-25](#) by April 2024. Approved projects will be listed for students who have not self-sourced, to select in June.



## 2023 Examples of MD Projects

- Multi-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* carriage rates in healthy rural people
- The rural Bladder Botox Experience - idiopathic and spinal cord injured patients
- Systems-based approach to building a rural generalist workforce
- Virtual reality therapy in palliative care in rural communities
- Workplace cultural safety: The lived experience of Aboriginal early career clinicians
- Audit of Royal Flying Doctor Service retrievals
- Audit of readmissions for eating disorder patients in Western NSW Local Health District

Fig 1. Map of existing Rural Clinical Schools of CSU School of Rural Medicine