

# Generation Y doctors wedded to the city lifestyle

Sarah Colyer, Australian Doctor, 6 June 2008

GENERATION Y doctors will accept nothing short of an 80% pay rise as incentive to work in rural practice, a study of outer-metropolitan Sydney registrars shows.

Even retaining young doctors in outer suburbs could prove a struggle in future, with almost all registrars saying they would not live in lower socioeconomic areas, although they would be prepared to drive to them if it took less than 90 minutes each way.

Social researcher Mr Mark **McCrindle** presented his findings, based on interviews with 42 registrars at basic and advanced stages of training, at the recent Rural Workforce Agency Victoria conference.

The results shatter the myth that young single doctors are the most likely candidates for work in the bush, with this group commonly reporting busy social lives and a preference for the café lifestyle holding them to the city.

Doctors with young families were generally wary of settling into country life because of a lack of private schools.

While a six-month rural term was a great learning experience, many registrars said they were discouraged from rural work after witnessing run-down and isolated supervisors.

Asked what it would take to “buy them out” to the bush, every registrar suggested a pay increase of 80-100% above what they were earning in the city, provided they were well supported, in one of the new super-clinics, for instance.

The fly-in fly-out model of rural service was favoured by all registrars, with some suggesting conditional travel reimbursements for the extended family.

“Generation Y doctors are thinking about work-life balance, about the children's social needs and broadband [Internet] access,” Mr **McCrindle** told Australian Doctor .

He signalled that a whole-of-community, business and government approach was needed to provide the conditions Generation Y demanded for general practice.