



NEWSLETTER - EDITION SEVEN

DOCS CONNECT

CONNECTING THE DOCS: CONNECTING THE DOCS: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE HEALTHCARE TOGETHER

BY DR. NABREES SINNALEBBE, FOUNDING MEMBER - CTD

As I reflect on the journey we've been on with Connecting the Docs (CTD), I'm feeling both humbled and incredibly energised by the momentum we're gaining, not just here in Victoria, but across Australia and even internationally. We truly are true to our purpose of placing the right doctor in the right community to provide the right care.

Over the past few months, we've been busy doing what we do best: connecting skilled, passionate doctors with communities that need them most. And the results speak for themselves. We've just successfully placed two fantastic doctors into a regional health service both of whom shared how much they valued the personalised support, transparency, and genuine care they experienced throughout the CTD process.

Even better? Their new employer echoed those sentiments, noting how supported they felt by our collective. It's moments like these that remind us why we started this work and why we're more committed than ever to growing and strengthening healthcare access in rural and regional areas.

We're also incredibly proud to share that we've already begun onboarding four incredible new partners: Omeo District Health, Bairnsdale Regional Health, Orbost Regional Health and Gippsland Lakes Complete Health. We're thrilled to be working alongside these services and look forward to helping them connect with great doctors ready to make a meaningful difference in their communities.

As Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas said: "This program backs our medical workforce and supports their development across rural and regional areas so they can continue to provide world-class care for all Victorians right across the state." You can read the full media release here: <https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/delivering-doctors-where-they-are-needed-most>

With all this exciting growth, our founding members recently came together to reflect on where we are today and to strategise for what's next. We're looking closely at our systems, partnerships, and opportunities to scale CTD in a way that stays true to our mission and values. We know that for CTD to succeed long-term, we need to keep doing what makes it work: a human approach, clear communication, strong relationships, and a deep understanding of the communities we serve.

On the community side, we also had the privilege of being part of the recent Monash Drivers Awards, where our new partner – CEO of Omeo District Health, Dan Cziperle, presented awards to some outstanding individuals who are leading the way in rural and regional health. Congratulations again to all the winners – it's always inspiring to celebrate the people who make a real difference on the ground.

One of the most valuable parts of this journey is the ongoing feedback we get from doctors. Again and again, we're hearing how much they appreciate the authenticity, clarity, and support we offer at every step of their recruitment and transition. This feedback doesn't just make us smile, it drives us. It's pushing us to keep investing in better systems, stronger digital tools, and more comprehensive support. Because when our doctors feel empowered, our communities thrive.

Our focus remains crystal clear: build a sustainable healthcare workforce by connecting the right doctors with the right communities and support them long after they arrive. We're so proud of how far CTD has come, and even more excited about where it's headed. Thank you to everyone including our partners, colleagues, and candidates who continue to walk this journey with us. Together, we're making sure that access to healthcare isn't defined by geography, but by connection, care, and collaboration.

Warm regards,

Nabrees Sinnalebbe FRACMA FACHSM

CTD Founding Member

Chair of Victorian Rural Generalist Program- Loddon Mallee

Executive director of Medical Services and Chief Medical officer, Mildura Base Public Hospital

CTD & REGIONAL UPDATES

Let us give you a snapshot of what's been happening across our CTD community

We're excited to welcome Bairnsdale Regional Health, Omeo District Health, Orbost Regional Health, and Gippsland Lakes Complete Health to the CTD collective. Together, we're building stronger connections and better health outcomes for the communities of Omeo, Orbost, Lakes Entrance, and Bairnsdale.

As a collective, this initiative will improve coordination between services, increase access to specialist care, and ensure local health needs are met more effectively. By working together, we can share knowledge, resources, and support to deliver more integrated and responsive healthcare across the region.



Connecting the Docs is incredibly proud to celebrate a major milestone for one of our own CTD ambassadors – **Dr. Ned Chalmers**, who has officially completed all requirements for the Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

Ned joined the team at Kerang Medical Clinic in February 2025, relocating from Warrnambool while completing the final stages of his AGPT training. Since then, he's made an outstanding contribution not just to healthcare, but to the wider community.

A familiar face to many, Ned has:

1. Featured in our Connecting the Docs video series
2. Joined us at the April Networking Event in Swan Hill
3. Explored exciting rural generalism pathways through VRGP
4. Engaged with Charles Sturt University, via Swan Hill District Health, to further his passion for rural research

Being a country boy at heart, Ned has seamlessly become part of the Kerang community – embracing local sport, connecting with community, and living the rural lifestyle he values.

He is a brilliant example of what Connecting the Docs is all about – supporting passionate doctors to thrive in rural practice. Congratulations Ned. We look forward to your continued contribution to our amazing community.



Last week, the Connecting the Docs initiative was featured on the WIN network airing across regional Victoria – and showcased the growing commitment to improving access to healthcare in rural and regional communities.

Our founding members shared their insights on the program, emphasising the power of collaboration and the opportunity to address workforce challenges across health services by working in partnership.

The program is now expanding into East Gippsland, supporting even more communities to attract and retain doctors where they're needed most.

New health services joining the initiative will help continue to build momentum, supporting regional and rural communities to secure sustainable, high-quality healthcare – and making it easier for doctors to live and work in country Victoria.



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Win News Feature - CTD

