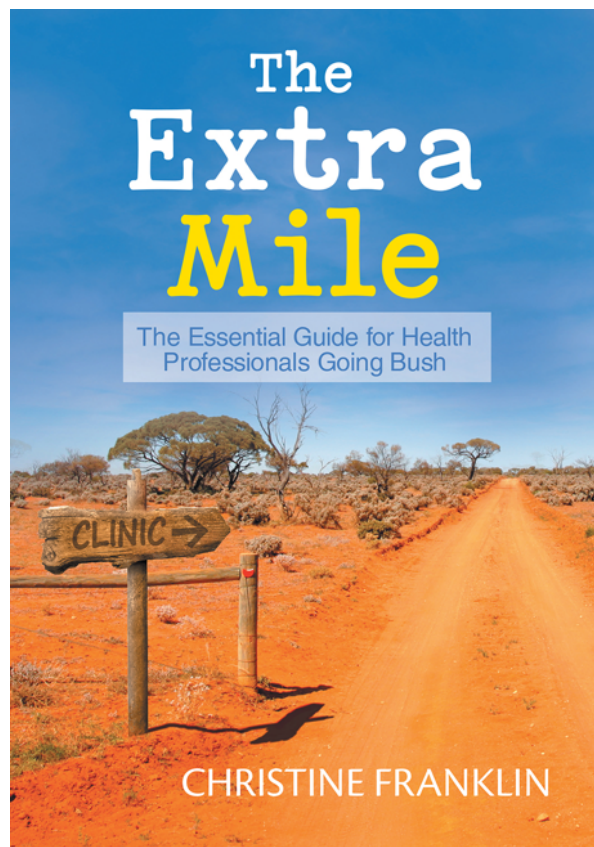


Going the Extra Mile: Rural Health Recruitment Resource

Christine Franklin 29 August 2019



"The Extra Mile: The Essential Guide for Health Professionals Going Bush" is a text which brings together much of the important information required to work effectively in the rural or remote context. The book helps to address workforce issues and support the transition of health professionals to rural practice.

One of the more difficult challenges in delivering effective, culturally appropriate, and sustainable health services in regional areas is recruiting and retaining the right

workforce. It is not uncommon for professionally well-qualified staff to be recruited to regional positions with great hopes and expectations of long tenure, only to have them depart early, sometimes in distress and leaving communities in need.

All too often the mistake is made that the only skills required for rural health practice sit in professional or clinical domains. In fact, the diversity of skills required for successful and satisfying rural practice lay beyond a good resume or university grades and are sadly overlooked during recruitment or orientation programs. *The Extra Mile* demonstrates that having the right set of both intra and interpersonal skills can mean make it or break it with new recruits.

Author Christine Franklin has a background in education and psychology and has worked for more than 20 years in the Australian rural and remote context. She has earned a reputation for her practical and compassionate approach and is recognized for her leadership in establishing mentoring programs and training to support and retain professionals in rural and remote locations. Franklin successfully brings together her expertise to present a useful and easy to read resource with recognized relevance across sectors.

As a rural health advocate and passionate mentor Franklin recognizes the need to support and educate new recruits to rural practice, not only for their benefit but to the

benefit of the whole community. When organizations can retain effective, high functioning staff and communities can connect with culturally competent clinicians, cost savings are significant and health gains are more likely.

The Extra Mile has received praise and support from across the Australian rural/remote community, not only within health but education, policing, and local government. Topics include introductions to social determinants of health, cultural competence and safety, understanding context, communication skills, and self-care.

Christopher Cliffe, Chief Executive Officer for the Council of Remote Area Nurses Australia, said *"Franklin's... background in psychology and education provides an excellent insight for health professionals and gives them practical tools to personally and professionally adapt to the rural context. We are reminded that it is not only our professional skills, which ensure we thrive in this new space but also careful reflection of our own personal development."* This new resource provides readers with useful exercises to check their own self-knowledge and self-care strategies to ensure longevity in rural postings.

Having been identified by several Australian University Departments of Rural Health, the unique handbook is proving valuable in enticing practitioners to commit to rural placements and preparing them for what lies ahead. No other book brings together these ideas so effectively.

Rob Curry, President of Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health, says *"Relocating to a health professional life in rural or remote Australia is a challenge...While there is a risk of finding it a socially and professionally isolating experience, many others find it a life-changing choice that expands rather than limits their capacity for a fulfilling life. The Extra Mile seeks to get us stepping out on the right foot for a positive and creative experience. (The author's) wisdom and advice on such matters as preparing for the transition, effective communication, and looking after yourself, all strike resonant chords for me...A wonderful resource."*

With the World Health Organization (WHO) having identified mentoring and support as one of the most significant factors in the retention of staff and the sustainability of health services, this resource makes for a practical and cost effective tool to introduce new recruits to the challenges and delights that rural practice can provide.

Author bio



Christine Franklin is the founder and principal consultant of Sybella Health. With a background in education and psychology Christine has more than 20 years of experience working with individuals and communities to bring about positive change. She has extensive rural and remote experience working in the public mental-health system, with individuals and community groups as well as in private practice.

In 2011 Christine founded Sybella Health in recognition of the specific training and support needs of professionals making a transition to rural and remote workplaces. Christine is passionate about rural health and its role in the vitality and sustainability of rural communities. She is driven to enhance the experience of those who choose to “go bush,” and through Sybella Health new rural professionals and their partners are offered the guidance they need to make their new role one of significant personal and professional growth.

Based in Queensland’s Whitsunday region, Christine is

married with two young children and is an active member of her local community.