

RUSTICA Student Survey 2005

Report

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Introduction

During the second semester of the 2005 academic year RUSTICA conducted a survey of students studying at the University of Tasmania undertaking either Medicine, Nursing or Pharmacy.

The aim of this survey was to:

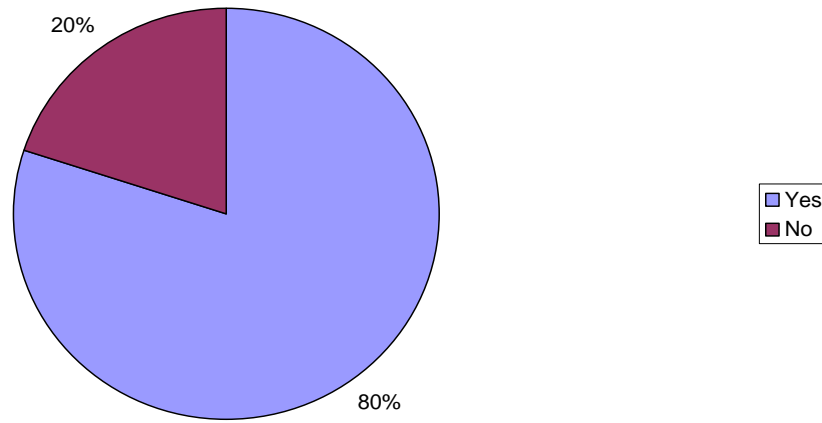
- Gauge Rustica's effectiveness at supporting Rural student
- Gauge the effectiveness of Rustica at supporting students wanting to work in a rural setting
- Measure the demographics of our membership
- Determine strength and weaknesses in the club
- Measure the popularity of activities
- Receive feed back from both members and non-members
- Learn how successful attempts to become more multidisciplinary have been
- Obtain ideas for new activities to offer and test the reception to some possibilities

This survey was written predominantly by Jennifer Flynn, Rustica's Scholarship Representative for 2005. Drafts of the survey were submitted to Rustica's committee members for review and editing.

Copies of the survey were handed to students at lectures and in the case of Northern Nursing Students, distribution was via email.

Results

Question 1: Are you a Rustica Member

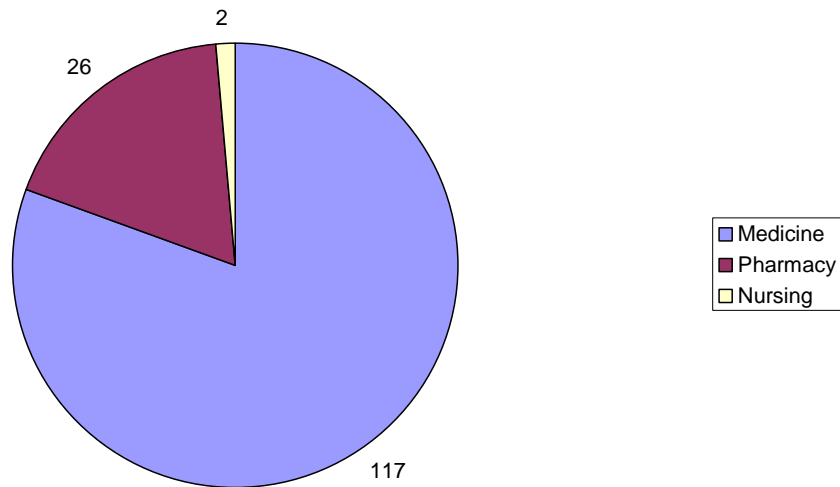


Graph 1(Question 1): Of the 147 survey responses RUSTICA received, 20% were from non-members.

Question 1b: If you are not a RUSTICA member, what are your reasons for not joining?

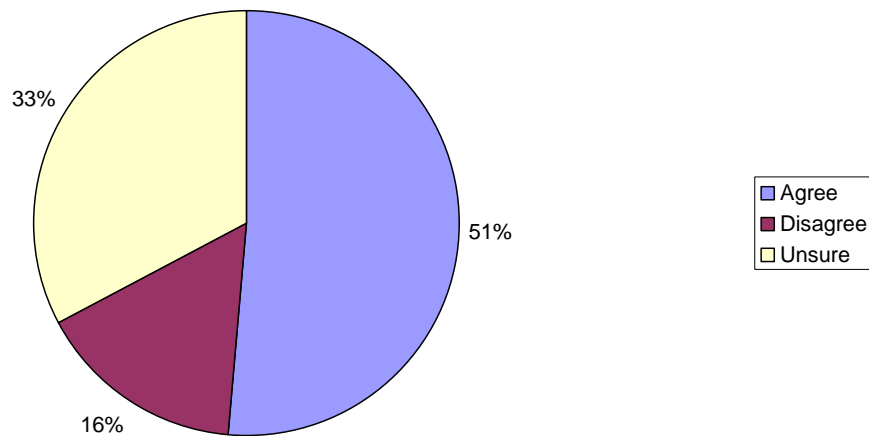
- Because I don't know about events, don't know anyone going to events
- Can't remember if I signed up or not
- Didn't go to Clubs and Societies day, haven't had the chance since, I want to
- Didn't have enough money at the time and haven't got around to it, I just joined TAPS
- Don't know
- Effort
- Forgot to renew it
- Forgot to sign up, I am lazy
- Guess I didn't have enough money on societies day and haven't been able to pay for events since then
- Have been in the past and didn't feel I got enough out of it, it is too med focused
- Haven't been to the functions
- Haven't got around to it
- Haven't thought about it- if I was personally asked I would join
- I haven't got around to it
- I missed the sign up day
- I will join at the first event I go to this year
- Keep forgetting
- Never thought about it, career stuff is something I will think about next year
- Not going to participate in Rustica Activities

Question 2: Course of Study



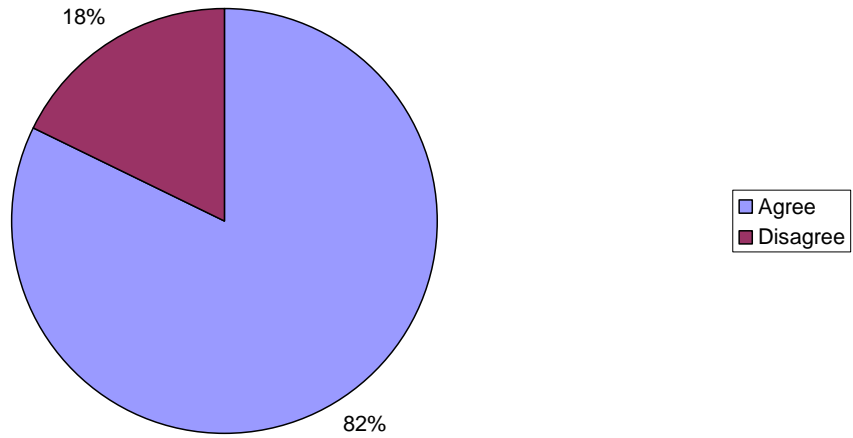
Graph 2 (Question 2): Over $\frac{3}{4}$ of responses were from Medical students. Due to the survey being distributed via email to nursing students there was a very poor response rate. This survey primarily represents the views of Medical students. Unless otherwise stated responses from all courses will be included in the results below.

Question 3: I have an interest in a career in Rural Health



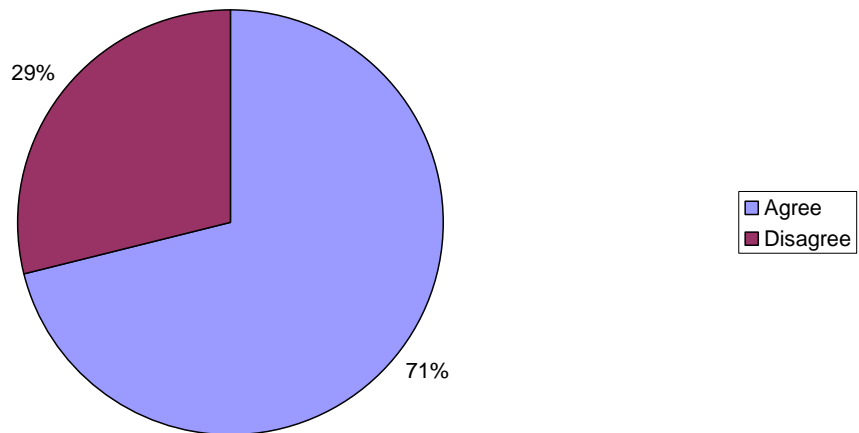
Graph 3 (Question 3): Of those students surveyed over half expressed an interest in a career in rural health. Only 16% were adamant that they were not interested in working in a rural environment

Question 4: I have an interest in current rural health issues



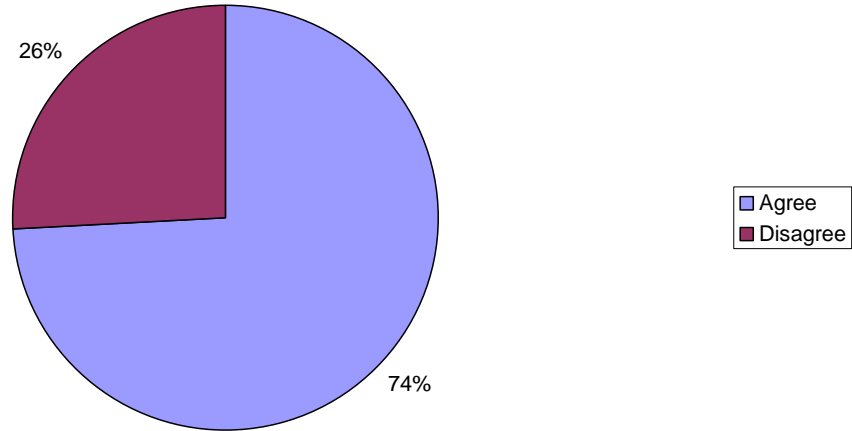
Graph 4 (Question 4): More than 4 out of 5 people surveyed expressed an interest in current rural health issues.

Question 5: I have an interest in Indigenous Health Issues



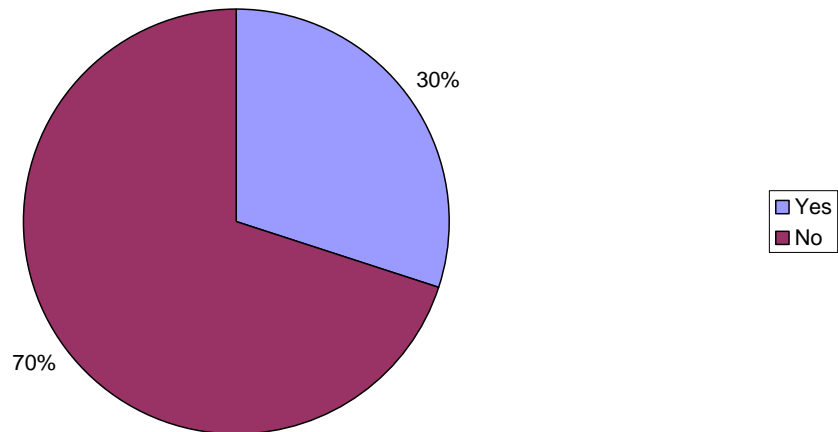
Graph 5 (Question 5): Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of people surveyed expressed an interest in the issues of indigenous health

Question 6: I would like to learn more about Indigenous issues



Graph 6 (Question 6): $\frac{3}{4}$ of respondents wanted to learn more about indigenous health issues.

Question 7: I have had rural clinical experience



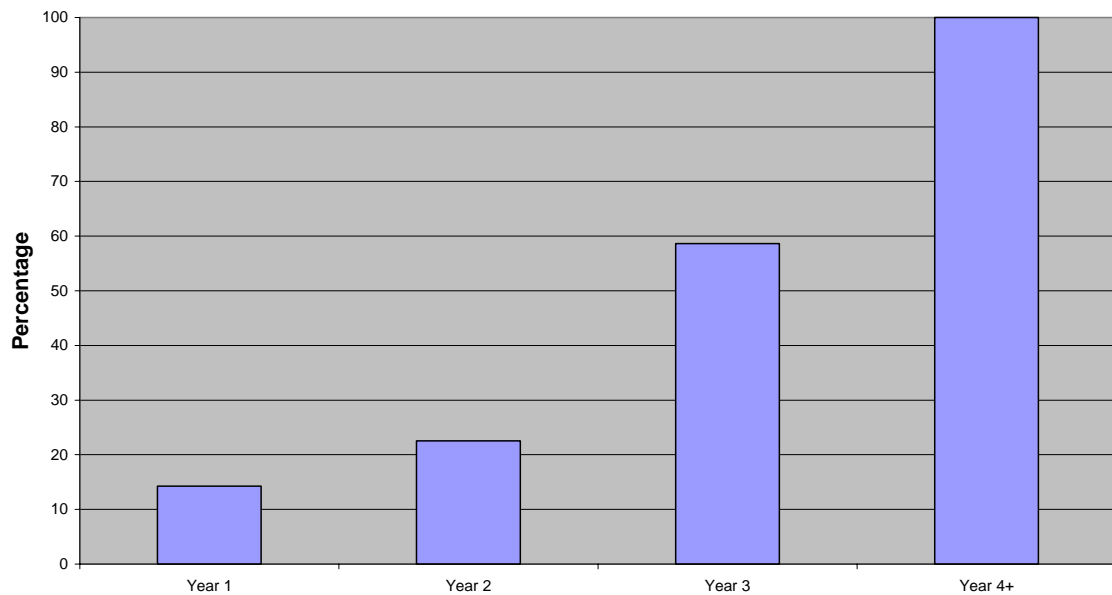
Graph 7 (Question 7): Just under $\frac{1}{3}$ of people surveyed had had rural clinical experience.

Question 7b: *Please describe your Rural Clinical Experience*

- 1 week each at Swansea and hospital placement at NWRH
- 1 week in a rural community visiting GP, nursing homes, hospital and community pharmacy
- 1 week pharmacy placement in Scottsdale, It was fun. Spent time in the hospital, nursing homes, pharmacy and GP clinics
- 1 week placement at Nubeena pharmacy
- 2 months in Oatlands
- 2 weeks in St Mary's GP< 1 week cultural program Alice Springs, 4 weeks Tennant Creek Hospital, 4 weeks in Yuenumni, various rural GP weekends, adventure camps etc. Year 5 at NWRCS
- 3rd year placement
- As part of previous education
- As part of the Clin Specs
- Burnie, NWR hospital
- Clin Specs Rural Placement, self organized rural experience, RFDS clinic in NSW
- Devonport, not very rural
- Good
- Hospital and general practice
- Interesting but reinforced my desire to work in a city
- I thoroughly enjoyed it
- It was a very rewarding experience that has been a valuable part of the course. I have only positive experiences
- Lived in a rural area my whole life so did work experience in a base hospital; parents work in path. Lab in rural base hospital so often went to see what they did at work
- My father has a rural clinic and I have worked in that as a student and as a medical receptionist
- North West Rural Clinical School for 1 year
- North West Rural Clinical School, John Flynn Scholarship, Rural Prac on the East Coast, advanced studies; remote aboriginal community and pacific islands
- Nubeena, it was a fantastic taster of rural health and the variety it offers
- NWRCS- Burnie
- NWRCS, flinders Is, GP Placement for Clin Specs, Darwin Emergency Dept; Aboriginal Health
- NWRH placement Bicheno community rural placement 1 week each
- NWRH Triabunna
- One placement in a community hospital mining town, another in a multipurpose health facility in a farming community
- Ophthalmology in regional centre
- Part of RAMUS Scholarship and work experience
- Placement: it was fun
- RAMUS rural Dr mentor scheme

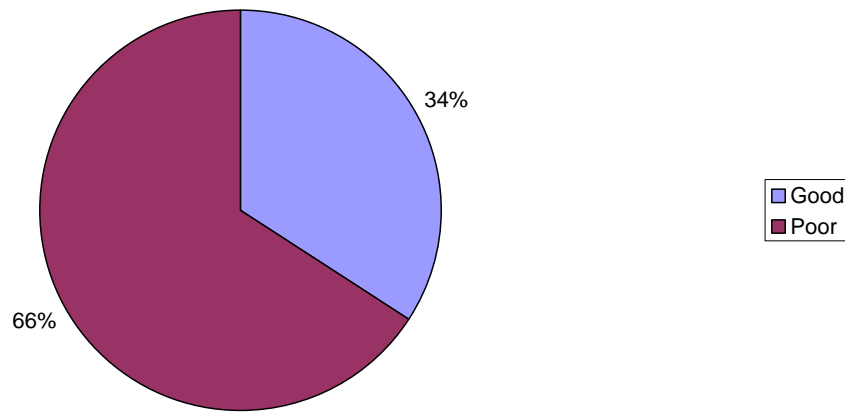
- RCS Burnie
- Rural hospital
- Rural Pharmacy placement, rural hospital placement, rural nursing home, worked in a rural pharmacy
- Rural placement at Sorrell
- Smithton, Burnie
- Smithton, Burnie, Rural NSW, Broken Hill, Aboriginal Health Service: Broken Hill
- Smithton, Burnie, Shearwater
- Spending time in practice with my mentor (RAMUS)
- Through a RAMUS Scholarship, mentor in rural SA
- Worked in a rural clinic dispensing drugs, was fun
- Working in a community pharmacy in a rural area
- Year 5 study

Question 8: In which year does Clinical Placement become relevant.



Graph 8 (Question 8): Shows that almost 60% of students agreed that information regarding clinical placements would be relevant to students in their 3rd year of study.

Question 9: My understanding of health issues relating to rural and remote areas is...



Graph 9 (Question 9): Only 1/3 of students surveyed believed that they had a good understanding of the issues relating to rural and remote areas.

Question 9b: I would like to learn more about...

- Career opportunities, strengths and weaknesses in rural medicine, options for postgraduate training in rural areas
- Emergency surgery in a rural setting
- Everything x7
- More clinical based stuff that I am probably going to see in community pharmacy
- Indigenous and immigrant health
- Indigenous health x4
- Indigenous health and remote access x2
- Job opportunities and expectations
- Just issues relating to med students and opportunities in general
- Public Education re health services in rural areas, treatment options and differences between rural and urban areas, stresses associated with rural work
- Range of work opportunities in rural/remote communities
- Retention and recruitment of health professionals in rural and remote areas
- Rural health in general x6
- Setting up a practice in a rural area and government financial support for this
- Specialty training, anesthetics, surgery, Emergency. Med.

- Specific factors affecting rural areas, financial limitations, opportunities for doctors in rural areas, particular/common health problems in rural areas, type of jobs possible
- Specific problems affecting rural people and their concerns
- The extent of health care in rural and remote areas (i.e. how much of a disadvantage is it to live in R&R areas compared to urban?)
- The main problems in rural areas
- The services rural and remote GP require
- What is rural? Do rural workers get paid more? Are rural workers supported by the government?
- What specialties and career paths are relevant to and available in rural health

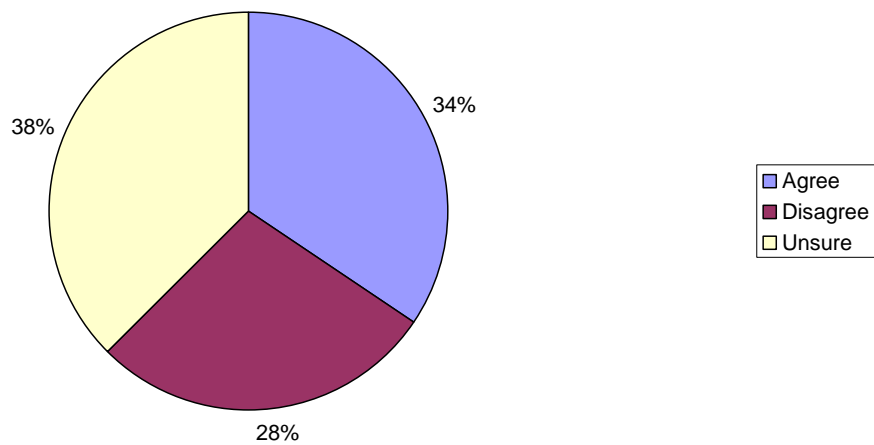
Alumni Scholarship (Tas)
Botswana Government
Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship x2
Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarship
Commonwealth Learning Scholarship x5
Harold Carroll Memorial Scholarship
JFSS x5
MBP student
MRBS x16
Vietnam Elective Scholarship
Pharmacy Rural Health Scholarship
Public Service Department of Malaysia
RACT Medicine
RAMUS x 6
St John Ambulance Bursary
Tas Uni Scholarship x6

Table 1(Question10): *The above table lists the range of scholarships that were held by the people surveyed.*

Questions 11 and 12: *Please name and Scholarships you have applied for and held in the past.*

Too few people responded to these questions to get meaningful data

Question 13: Rustica has improved my awareness of rural and remote health care issues.



Graph 10 (Question 13): Students were evenly divided as to whether or not Rustica had improved their awareness of Rural and Remote health Care Issues, with only 34% agreeing.

Indigenous Weekend	0
Cultural Awareness Session	2
CME Weekend	4
Trauma	5
CPD Weekend	5
Rural Health Conference	8
Health Career Camp	12
Agfest	14
FARC	15
Adventure Camp	15
Quiz Night	31
Scholarships Night	38
Rustica Ball	42
Electives Night	49
Rustica Welcome	69
Societies Day	77
BBQ	80
Skills Night	81

Table 2 (Question 14): The above table illustrates the attendance distribution for Rustica events from least to most attended. The most popularly attended event was the Skills Night, followed closely by the BBQ and Societies Day.

Question 15: For Each Activity attended, please provide some brief thoughts about the event.

General Comments:

- All events were fun and interesting
- All events were well organized and very interesting
- All fantastic,
- All good
- All have been very interesting and useful not only to raise awareness but in providing fun events.
- All the events were good but all aimed at MED, it gets boring, why not some resources placed into the other schools so that Pharmacy can organize it's own talks etc. without having so much med involvement. A problem is relevance and incentive
- All were great
- Beer, beer, nothing to do with today's rural issues pressing our society
- In general they were great and well planned
- Interesting, too much alcohol
- Overall every event was very worth while
- They all rocked
- They have all been interesting and fun, a great chance to socialize with other health science students
- Too much alcohol

Skills Night:

- Great and very interesting.
- The most useful events
- Organized and very interesting
- Maybe skills nights with junior Docs, Regs, residents?
- Beneficial esp. venipuncture
- Particularly interesting and relevant
- Would like skills night more often
- Interesting, a great benefit to learn and talk about different situations that we might come up against, great to mix with students and professionals with great experiences to share.
- Funny Docs, however it was more medical based which seemed a pity
- Need more skills nights to learn suturing, IV set ups etc
- It was fun and I'm sure the skills will come in handy later
- Awesome, fun and informative
- Fun, educational , definitely need more than 1 per year
- Good
- Great, more input needed in regional campuses

- Useful
- Very useful and interesting, should have more
- Very useful, there should be emphasis more in the course
- Very very good and informative
- Was fun and interesting
- Was good and useful
- Was good but not enough availability for some pracs, Would be willing to pay \$5-10 to get into the pracs I wanted
- Great
- Was interesting, needed more places for venipuncture and suturing
- Very useful, good to have some content outside the usual curriculum
- Interesting, something we don't learn in class
- Very useful, would love to see more hands on/practical activities
- Both interesting and useful
- Useful and fun but because you only get to do 2 activities you don't get to go to all the speakers so education is limited- maybe the events should run through out the afternoon?
- The skills nights that I have attended were disappointing to say the least, I was unable to attend any of the skills that I wanted to even though I arrived on time
- Excellent, need food other than pizza
- Relevant for course, brief insight into what you will do

Adventure Weekend:

- Great
- Really fun
- Adventure weekends are great
- I love the adventure camps
- Great place to get away and relax. Adventures were rewarding. A great way for people to bond. Everyone got on really well.

BBQ:

- BBQ's always great.
- Successful eating,
- Good for winding down and maintaining good mental health
- Good atmosphere and a good chance to talk with other students.
- Really good, need kebabs for the BBQ
- Great
- Sausages!
- BBQ's always welcomed

Rustica Ball:

- Bush dust and damper were the best food I've ever had
- Fantastic,
- Very fun, good spirit,
- Good for winding down and maintaining good mental health
- I liked the damper and bush dust at the ball
- Fun
- Great fun

Societies Day:

- Tops.
- Societies day 04, good intro to clubs and societies
- Good for winding down and maintaining good mental health
- I only came for the beer. My level of dedication and motivation for self learning is poor
- Well organized and enjoyable
- Crazy, great t-shirts
- Lots of beer

Rustica Welcome:

- Good fun.
- Good atmosphere and a good chance to talk with other students.
- Lots of fun, wasn't really relevant to rural health issues though
- Parties lots of fun
- Rustica welcome was sick, got some wicked photos
- Has potential to be a very good event if the venue is changed from Heat night club to somewhere else
- Fun
- Booze!
- A bit boring
- Fun and interesting

Quiz Night:

- Fun, challenging Questions can be more interesting and more variety needed, (Esp. Sports, every 2nd question was from AFL last year, what about motor sports, yacht, netball etc?)
- More informative, should focus a bit more on rural questions or 1/2 rural
- Lots of fun
- Great

CPD Weekend:

- CPD Weekend particularly interesting and relevant

Electives Night:

- Electives Night was useful, could have been expanded
- Very useful
- Good
- Love listening to stories from rural placement etc
- A bit boring
- Very interesting, helps with option choosing
- Very informative, maybe power point files could be made available
- Good however, though nothing to do with rural health really
- Electives night very informative info on electives/advanced studies always useful

Scholarships Night:

- Very useful
- Good but only relevant for years 3+
- OK but a bit late as some applications had already closed
- OK, not really relevant to 1st years though
- Love listening to stories from rural placement etc
- Very informative, maybe power point files could be made available
- Good however, though nothing to do with rural health really

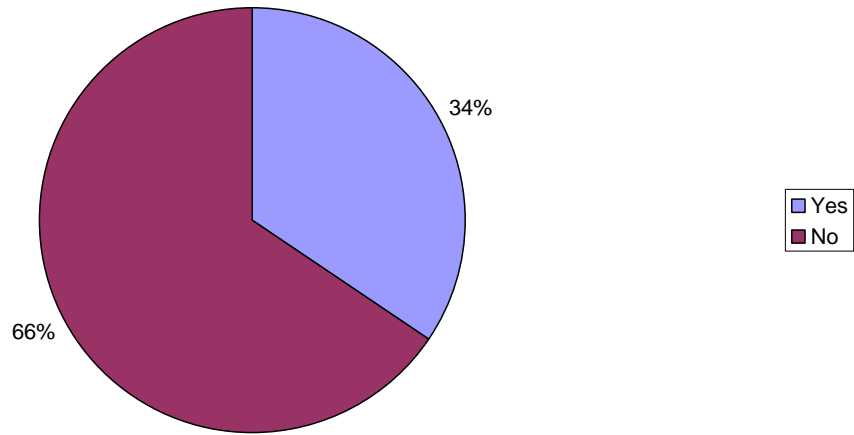
First Aid on the Run Camp:

- Excellent
- Interesting, good to learn different skills. Great to mix with other students of own faculty and meet those from other faculties.
- Fun interesting and useful

Health Careers Camp:

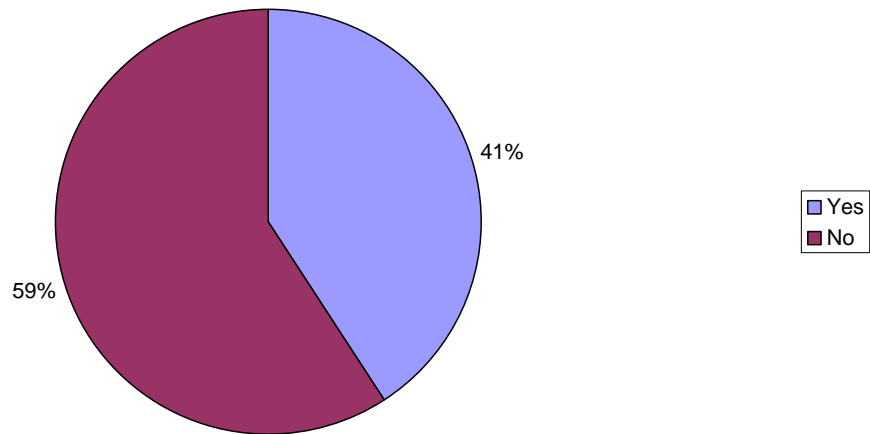
- Health careers camp good for the kids

Question 16: I have a Rural Background



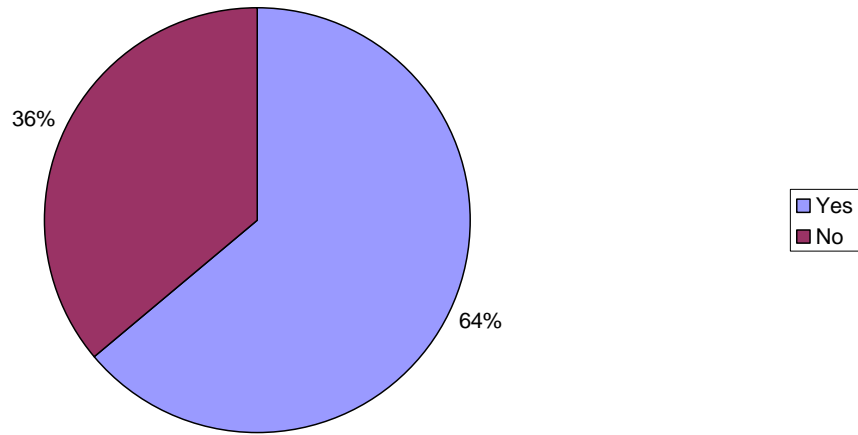
Graph 11(Question 16): 1/3 of students surveyed claimed to come from a rural background.

Question 16b.1: Has Rustica provided support in terms of Social Networks



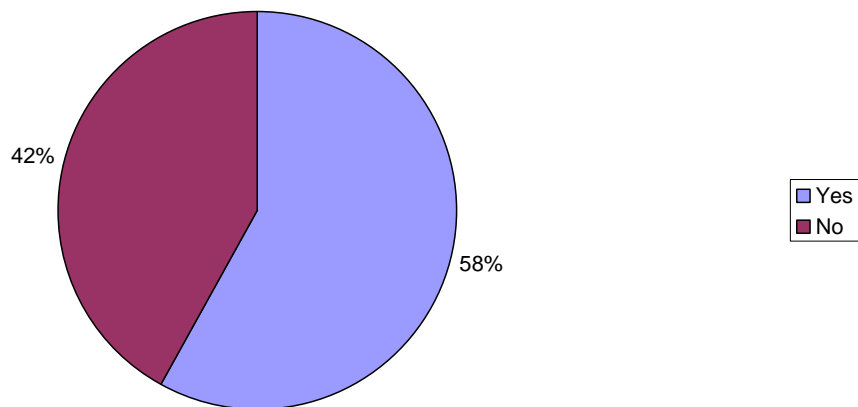
Graph 12 (Question 16b.1): Of those students identified as having a rural background, only 41% claimed that Rustica had provided support in terms of Social Networks

Question 16b.2: Has Rustica provided support in terms of Clinical Skills



Graph 13 (Question 16b.2): *Of those students identified as having a rural background, almost 2/3rds claimed that Rustica had provided support in terms of Clinical Skills*

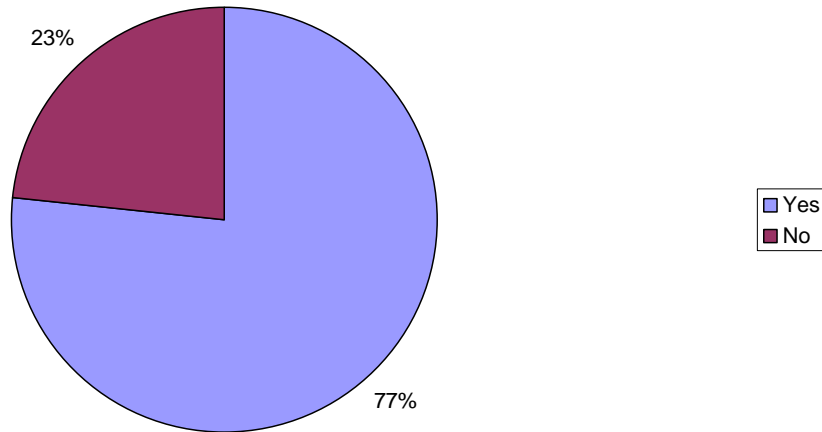
Question 16b.3: Has Rustica provided support in terms of Rural Careers Information



Graph 14 (Question 16b.3): *Of those students identified as having a rural background, 58% claimed that Rustica had provided support in terms of Rural Careers Information*

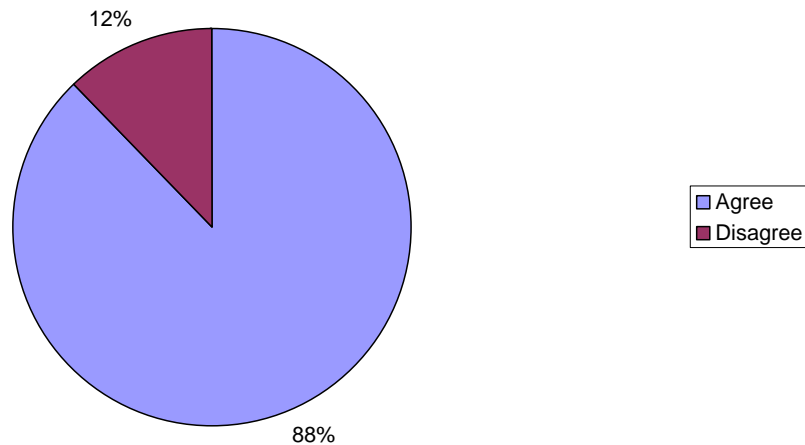
Seventeen people gave negative responses to Questions 16b.1-3 inclusive, the same number also gave positive responses to the three criteria.

Question 17: I have attended social functions organised by Rustica



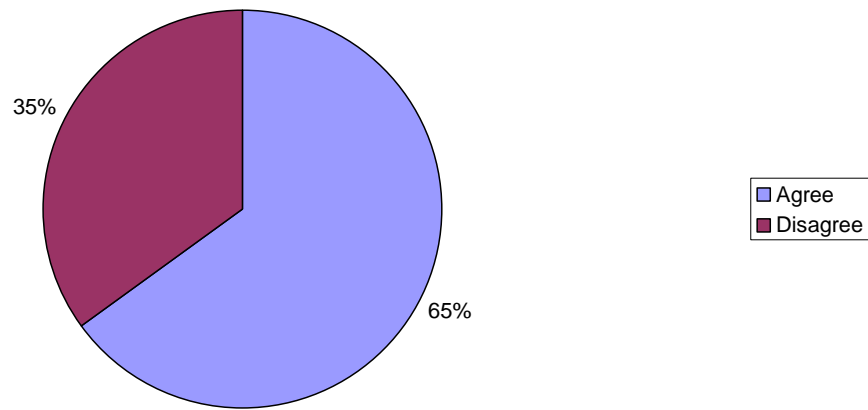
Graph 15 (Question 17): Over $\frac{3}{4}$ of people surveyed had attended one of Rustica's social functions.

Question 18: I would like to attend more social functions organised by Rustica



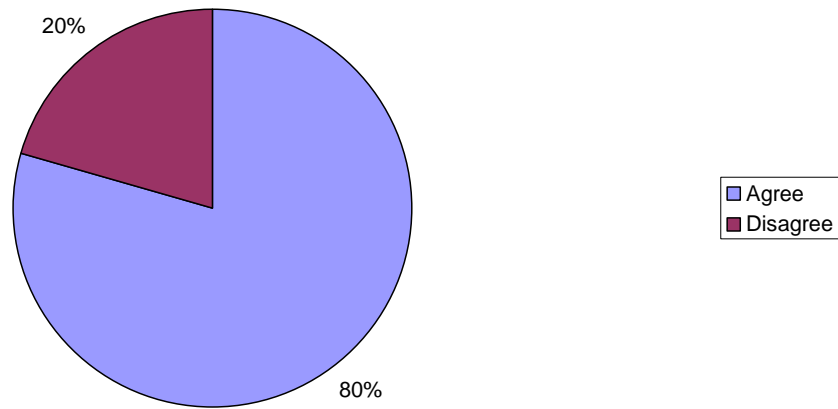
Graph 16 (Question 18): Almost 9/10 people surveyed expressed a desire to attend more Rustica organised social events.

Question 19: I would like to attend group discussions on relevant rural health issues



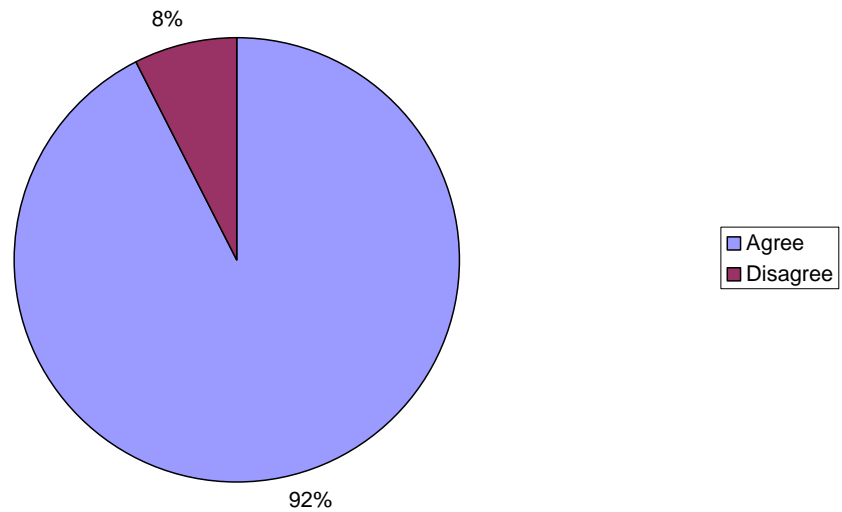
Graph 17 (Question 19): *Approximately 2/3rds of surveyed students would like to attend group discussions on rural health issues.*

Question 20: I would like to attend lectures by guest speakers on rural health issues



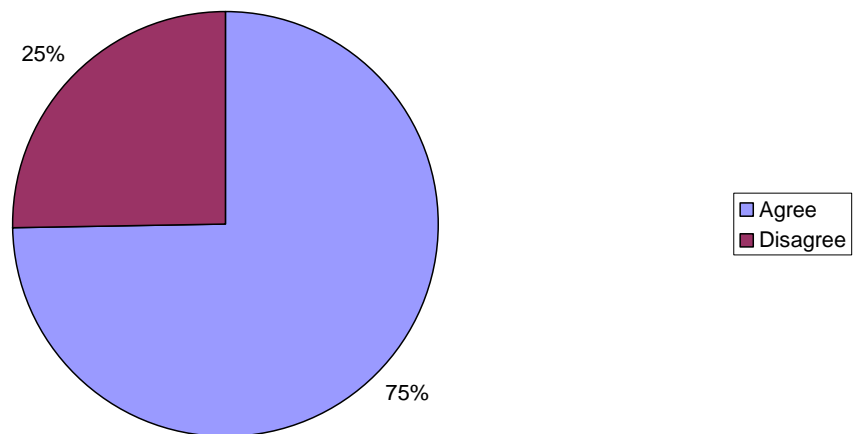
Graph 18 (Question 20): *When asked if they would like to attend lectures by guest speakers addressing rural health issues, 80% of those surveyed agreed.*

Question 21: I am aware of the Royal Australian Flying Doctors Service



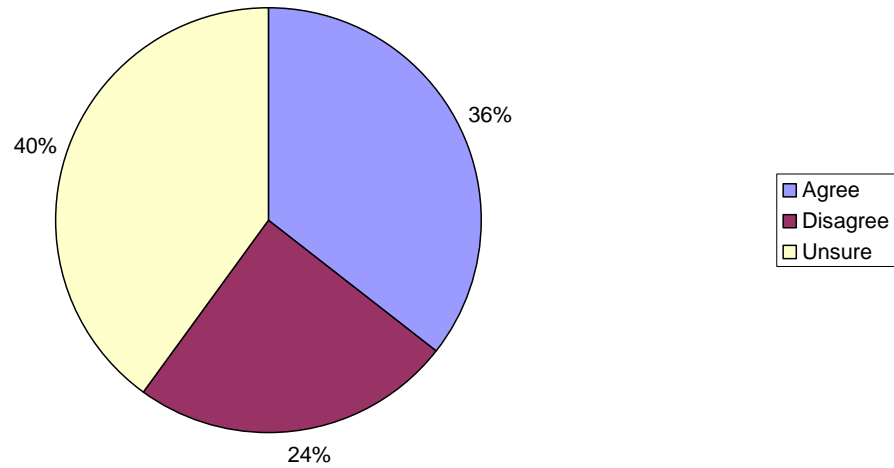
Graph 19 (Question 21): 92% of people surveyed had heard of the Royal Flying Doctors Service.

Question 22: I would like more information on the RFDS



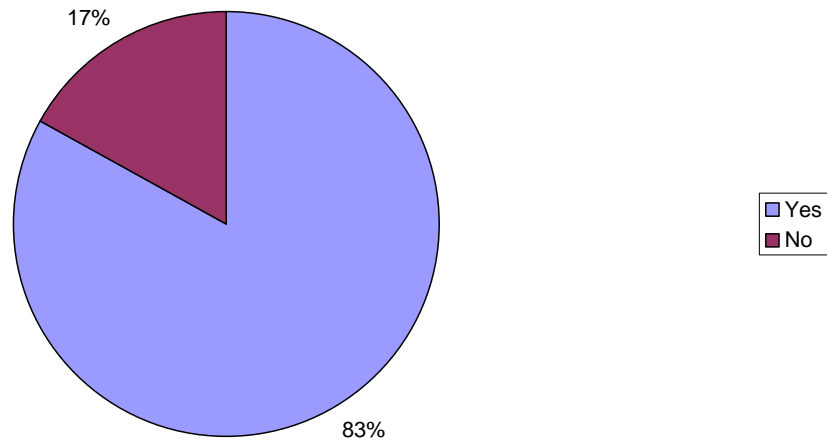
Graph 20 (Question 22): Three quarters of those surveyed expressed a desire to know more about the RFDS.

Question 23: I am interested in a career with the RFDS in the future



Graph 21 (Question 23): When asked whether they would be interested in a career with the RFDS, 40% of students were undecided whilst 36% agreed and only ¼ of students were decided against the idea.

Question 24: I feel Rustica has provided support (Rural Clinical School)

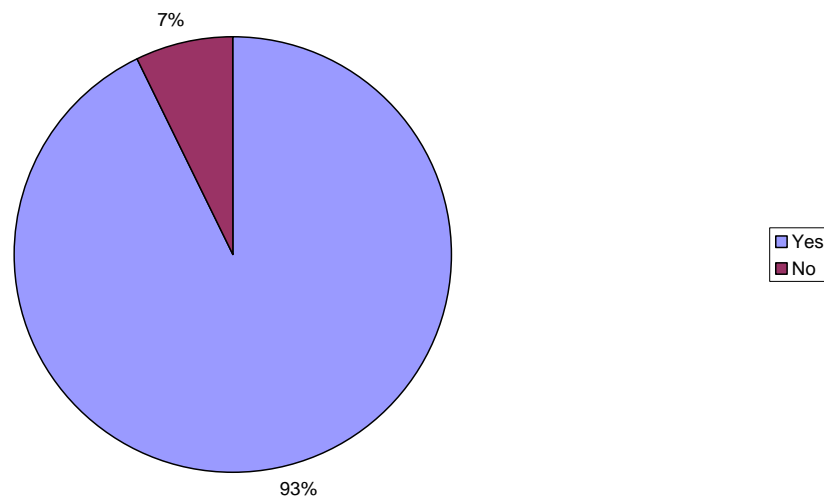


Graph 22 (Question 24): Of those students at the Rural Clinical School, 83% thought that they had received support from Rustica

Question 25: *What events would be interesting or helpful to you?*

- BBQs
- Camps x 6
- Clinical night and events
- Educational events x 2
- Electives information
- Events specifically for pharmacy or broad health issues
- Field trips x 2
- First Aid, More Rural related Skills
- Information Sessions (e.g. drug information, electives, pharmacy specific, end stage renal failure in Aboriginal communities, career options, guest speakers and general rural health issues)
- Learning about career options or experiences available now x3
- Maybe skills night at NWRCS
- More ATSI events please
- More clinical experience, activities related to rural health etc
- More electives nights x 2
- More notice would be good so people who work rosters have time to change
- More rural health info workshops, more rural health experiences
- More Skills Nights x24
- More social events x9
- Scholarships Night

Question 26: *Is your faculty adequately represented by Rustica*

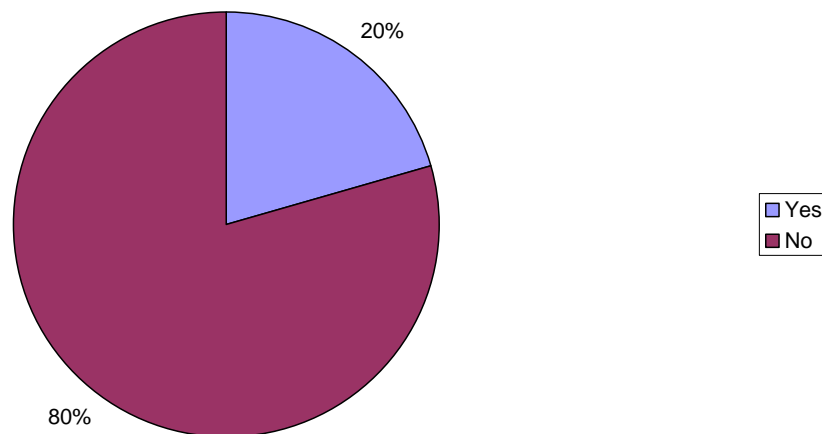


Graph 23(Question 26): *7% of students surveyed thought their faculty could be better represented by RUSTICA*

Question 27: How can Rustica better support your faculty?

- Cheap drinks, food, more spirits
- Go through TAPS, coordinate with them and support them with contacts and financially
- More actively promote itself and it's services at all campuses, maybe announcements for up coming events other than emails
- More clinical
- More social functions
- More educational events available outside uni hours
- More exposure in Burnie
- More info on career opportunities in the bush
- Needs to promote more student awareness re: rural health
- More Support at NWRCS i.e. stuff for new building
- Nursing needs students to get involved
- Provide more events etc for the rural clinical school
- Skills sessions in the North West
- More information about Pharmacy in Different rural settings
- More Pharmacy oriented skills nights
- Still need to increase Pharmacy activities however this has so far been a long hard process

Question 28: Do you know what the NRHN is?



Graph 23 (Question 28): When asked if they knew what the NRHN was, only 20% were able to reply in the affirmative.

Question 29: What do you consider the role of the NRHN to be?

- A network of people involved in rural health who want to keep people informed of the benefits and problems of rural health. Also to gain beneficial knowledge from a wider range of sources. To encourage people to get involved and participate in areas of interest.
- A representative and uniting body for rural health clubs in Australia
- Connect Rural Health with non-rural
- Educate and promote health work in rural areas
- Increased awareness of rural health
- Information regarding rural issues and scholarship schemes
- Keep up the good work, more advertising for events
- Link Rural health professionals to provide better service/health care
- Linking rural health throughout Australia
- National coordinating body for the rural health clubs
- Networking rural health clubs throughout Australia
- Overseeing rural health decisions relevant to students and promoting rural health
- Provide a means of connection for people/practitioners in the rural health field
- Provide info and support about rural health to health science students
- Providing Info and support to clinicians and med students and other health care workers in rural settings
- Provision of information on rural health, scholarships and networking
- Rural health
- Support Rustica?
- To provide a communication network between health students of all backgrounds, rural health professionals and the federal government
- To provide a network between each rural health club around us

Comments and Suggestions:

- Give out surveys after lecture
- Have not had a problem with a Rustica function. I have really enjoyed them
- I should probably be more involved in this type of thing but I just have never got around to it. But it is good to know it is available
- I would like to attend a national rural health conference and be more involved in RUSTICA however I am unsure how to go about applying etc. Perhaps more communication via email would be good.
- If Rustica could provide some more support for rural scholarship holders as we are the ones who will be working in rural areas that would be great. Things like what skills are required, talks by rural GPs, what training courses you can do, more exposure of ACRRM to students as it is so new, Support those going to rural areas as you do those coming from them.
- Love your webpage, easy to navigate through, frequently updated, photo comp a good idea, please keep it up.
- RFDS flyers and more talks
- Would like to see fewer boozy events and more educational ones,
- More hands on learning of suturing and stuff

- More notice of camps and skills nights. 4 weeks for a camp? It is too hard to get there
- More Skills Nights per year, More guest speakers
- No info received about elective scholarships, funding for conferences etc not well advertised to members, seems to only go to people in the know eg. Board members
- Organised rural site visits during school holidays/weekends
- Clinical placements at rural sites interstate
- Mentoring Year 11-12 students in rural areas via the internet.
- Directory of contact persons for info at rural sites (useful when choosing placements)

Discussion

Question 1: Are you a member of Rustica?

Of the 147 people surveyed, only 20% were not members of RUSTICA. This may be due to a number of factors including motivation to complete and return the survey and the distribution method of the surveys. However it may also be representative of the ratio of members to non members in the student body. RUSTICA currently has about 600 members and, for example, there are only 120 second year and 84 third year medical students, thus implying that the majority of medical students are RUSTICA members.

Question 1b: If you are not a member then what are your reasons for not joining?

The main reason given for not joining RUSTICA was not getting around to it. This suggests that to boost RUSTICA membership the effort has to be taken out of the joining up process. Perhaps manning a membership booth at the Sandy Bay Campus early in the year, after Societies Day, will catch those students who haven't joined already.

Question 2: What faculty are you studying in?

Only 2 Nursing students filled in and returned their survey forms. This is due to the survey being distributed late and via email instead of being distributed in lectures like for Pharmacy and Medical students. Approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of the surveys received were from Pharmacy students. As can be seen from the annual report (RUSTICA Annual Report 2005, Graph 2), approximately 15% of members are Pharmacy students and 19% are Nursing students, whilst 41% of members are medical students and the remainder are from other areas of study. This means that the opinions of Medical and Pharmacy students are over represented by this survey and Nursing and non-health science members are under represented.

Question 3: I have an interest in a career in rural health.

Approximately half of the people surveyed were interested in a career in rural health. Only 16% were adamant that they were not interested in a career in rural health. This leaves RUSTICA with approximately 84% of the student body to support and educate in regards to rural health issues and rural career options.

Question 4: I have an interest in current rural health issues

The number of people who expressed an interest in rural health issues (82%) is almost the same as the percentage who were interested or undecided in Question 3 (above). These two statistics combine to strengthen the evidence that RUSTICA would be a useful resource to 80-85% of health science students at the University of Tasmania.

Question 5: I have an interest in indigenous health issues.

Only 71% of students surveyed expressed an interest in indigenous health issues, compared to 82% who were interested in rural health issues in general. This may be due to the lack of exposure to Indigenous Tasmanian health issues in the media, leading students to consider indigenous health issues to be comparatively less relevant in this state.

Question 6: I would like to learn more about indigenous health issues.

Seventy four percent of student claimed they would like to know more about indigenous health issues, which is more than the percentage who claimed to be interested in indigenous health issues. This is a curiosity and may demonstrate that the decrease in interest from rural health to indigenous health is related to awareness and levels of education. My promoting indigenous health awareness RUSTICA may be able to increase interest in this area.

Question 7: Have you had rural clinical experience?

Only 30% of students surveyed had had rural clinical experience. This may be due to a bias of the sample leaning towards students in the lower years of their degree. However this also demonstrates that there is room to increase students' rural clinical exposure, possibly through field trips.

Question 7b: Please briefly describe your rural clinical experience.

The results of this question demonstrated three things.

1. Students gain rural clinical experience through a range of means including scholarship/mentor programs, study options and privately arranged situation.
2. Students generally considered their rural clinical experience to be a positive one.
3. Several towns were named as the site of the rural clinical experience. These towns could be compiled into a database to provide future students with important information.

Places Named in Question 7b:

Swansea	Devonport
Scottsdale	Nubeena
Nubeena	Flinders Island
Oatlands	Darwin
St Mary's	Bicheno
Alice Springs	Triabunna
Tennant Creek	Sorrell
Yuenumni	Smithton
NWRCS	Broken Hill
Burnie	Shearwater

Question 8: Clinical placement is relevant in...

This question was originally intended to show what year students considered clinical placement information to be pertinent. However due to the habit of circling multiple answers the results were analyzed with the assumption that clinical placements were relevant in each year after the first one circled and the data presented in a bar graph with cumulative data (e.g. all the 1st year results were added to the 2nd year results etc). This graph showed that 60% of students agreed clinical placement information was relevant by the 3rd year of study. Any information on clinical placement by RUSTICA should be aimed at the third year study bracket and above.

Question 9: My understanding of health issues relating to rural and remote areas is....

Two thirds of the students surveyed claimed that their understanding of rural and remote health issues was poor. This means that there is plenty of scope for RUSTICA to improve the knowledge base of the student body in regards to rural health.

Question 10: Please name any scholarships you hold.

The survey sample group contained 50 scholarship holders receiving 16 different types of scholarships. The most common were MRBS, RAMUS, UTAS, Commonwealth Learning and JFSS respectively.

Question 11 and 12: Please name any scholarship you have applied for or held in the past.

These questions were answered by so few of the respondents that no meaningful data could be drawn from them.

Question 13: Rustica has improved my awareness of rural and remote health issues.

This question is one of the ones that most closely defines the success of RUSTICA in this survey. With that in mind it is of concern that only 34% were sure that RUSTICA had improved their awareness of rural health issues. Perhaps emphasis should be moved away from expensive and small participation events, such as conferences and placed on mass exposure event such as lectures to help increase the participation rate and thus the effectiveness of the club.

Question 14: I have attended the following.

This question addresses popularity and accessibility of RUSTICA held events. Surprisingly the most popular event was not Societies Day but Skills Night, closely followed by the BBQ. Other extremely popular events included the RUSTICA welcome and Electives Night. The least attended events tended to be conferences and weekend camps as limits to the number of places available and the ability to make time available prevent a lot of students from participating.

Question 15: For each event you have attended, please provide some brief thoughts e.g. Was it useful, interesting?

Most responses were overwhelmingly positive. A few constructive criticisms include:

- Too much Alcohol
- Social Events not being relevant to Rural Health
- Desire for more skills nights, or more sessions
- A different venue for RUSTICA Welcome may be more appropriate
- Quiz night needs their questions improved, greater variety (e.g. sports other than football) and more rural questions.
- Scholarship night needs to be held earlier so that fewer scholarships have already closed

Question 16: I have a Rural Background

One third of the students surveyed claimed to have come from a rural background.

Question 16b: If YES to Question 16, has Rustica provided you with support in terms of social networks, clinical skills and rural career information?

The results from Question 16b1-3. were quite mixed. Only 41% of rural students thought that RUSTICA had helped them with Social Networking, whilst 64% thought they had benefited in the way of clinical skills and 58% thought they had gained rural careers information. Seventeen percent of rural students claimed to have received no benefit in any of these categories, the same percentage as claimed to have benefited in all three. There is certainly room for RUSTICA to improve their support of rural students

Question 17: I have attended social functions held by RUSTICA

This survey showed that 77% of students had attended one of RUSTICA's social functions.

Question 18: I would like to attend more social functions arranged by RUSTICA

Although 77% said they had attended RUSTICA's social functions, 88% claimed that they would like to attend more social functions in the future. This is a very high percentage and implies that social functions are a good way of reaching the students. Perhaps incorporating social events into educational ones would be an effective way of increasing awareness of rural health issues and rural career options.

Question19: I would like to attend group discussions on relevant rural health issues.

Sixty five percent of students surveyed suggested they would be interested in a group discussion on rural health. However there is often a decrease in numbers between interest on a survey and actual attendance. This idea has promise and should be trailed provisionally to test for actual support.

Question 20: I would like to attend lectures by guest speakers on relevant rural health issues

Eighty percent of those surveyed were interested in attending lectures by guest speakers. This is quite a high level of support and probably warrants establishing regular events through the year.

Question 21: I am aware of the Royal Flying Doctors Service.

At 92% positive response, almost everyone surveyed had heard of the RFDS.

Question 22: I would like more information on the RFDS

Three quarters of respondents wanted more information on the RFDS

Question23: I am interested in a career with the RFDS in the Future

Only 36% responded in the affirmative to this question. However only ¼ were adamant they were not interested. The results of Questions 22 and 23 suggest that an additional information event about the RFDS would be warranted but multiple events probably wouldn't be of benefit.

Question 24: I feel Rustica has provided support (if part of the clinical school)

Of those clinical school students surveyed, 83% thought that RUSTICA had provided support. This is a very pleasing result.

Question 25: What events would be interesting or helpful to you

Most of these comments were requests for more of the same activities/events already offered. By far the most significant was the request for more skills nights, more opportunities to learn suturing, skills nights outside Hobart etc. Over 25 people made comments along this line.

After the desire for more skills nights came interest in more social events, more camps, more elective nights and more educational events.

Question 26: Is your faculty adequately represented by RUSTICA

Only 7% of those surveyed felt their faculty was under represented by RUSTICA. These sentiments were mostly expressed by Pharmacy and Nursing students. Whilst there is some room for improvement in the multi-disciplinary representation of RUSTICA, some of the problem may be lack of participation by students outside of medicine. RUSTICA is a student run club and if Nursing or Pharmacy students need to look out for their own interests by helping the committee.

Question 27: How can RUSTICA better support your faculty

Responses to this question were along the lines of better promotion/exposure around the various campuses and organizing more events at the different campuses for non-medical students.

Question 28: Do you know what the NRHN is

Only 20% of those students surveyed thought they knew what the NRHN was. This is a significant problem as RUSTICA and the NRHN are so closely involved.

Question 29: What do you consider the role of the NRHN?

Only 20 of the 147 students surveyed tried to hazard a guess at what the NRHN does. Answers ranged from supporting RUSTICA to providing a communication network between health students of all backgrounds, rural health professionals and the federal government. Answers were generally vague and inexact.

There is a great need to educate the student body as to the nature of the NRHN.

Comments and Suggestions

Comments included, more skills nights, more notice of events, greater promotion of events, more educational events, fewer events with alcohol etc.

Similar to the results of Question 25.

Recommendations

- Increase the number of Skills Nights held each year from 2 to 6, including 2 skills nights not based in Hobart and 1 designed to be relevant to Pharmacy students.
- Hold a NRHN education event for members. Provide a BBQ for this event to encourage participation.
- Hold an annual Royal Flying Doctors Service information event, possibly in combination with a lecture by a guest speaker on rural health issues.
- Arrange a guest speaker to lecture about their experiences in rural health each year.
- Hold a single “Group Discussion about Rural Health Issues” evening to measure members’ response with the view of making it an annual event.
- Arrange a lecture on Indigenous health issues followed by a buffet meal (not pizza) and group discussion.
- Summarize the Koori Mail and National Indigenous Times contents and distribute to members each month via email.
- Attempt to ensure that at least 3 weeks notice is given of upcoming events by sending out emails and putting up posters.
- Arrange a Clinical Placement information and support event targeting students in their 3rd or later year of study.
- Compile a database with information on the towns mentioned in Question 7b to be added to the website.
- Actively encourage the Northern and North-Western branches to arrange activities for their members and increase support for this.
- Host a social event for scholarship holders in Semester 2 to receive feedback and offer support.
- Release 4 copies of the Rustica Rambler a year.
- Hold a social event for students from rural backgrounds early in the year to encourage the development of social networks and publicize the other RUSTICA events which may benefit them.
- Re-survey members in 12 months time, ensuring the survey form is distributed to the three major faculties (Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy) in hard copy during lectures, to measure changes in opinion.

Appendix 1: Survey Form

Thank you for completing our survey. To protect privacy and confidentiality, your responses are anonymous. Please do not put your name on this document. The data obtained from this survey will be used to help RUSTICA improve its services.

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability, some relate to events in previous years.

1. I am a RUSTICA member:

YES
NO

1b. If not, what are your reasons for not joining? _____

2. I am studying:

NURSING
MEDICINE
PHARMACY
SCIENCE
MEDICAL IMAGING
OTHER _____

3. I have an interest in a career in rural health.

AGREE
DISAGREE
UNSURE

4. I have an interest in current rural health issues:

Education, Support in Rural Areas for Health Professionals, Scholarships, Rural Career Information etc.)

AGREE
DISAGREE

5. I have an interest in Indigenous Health Issues:

AGREE
DISAGREE

6. I would like to learn more about the issues affecting indigenous populations in Australia:

AGREE
DISAGREE

7. I have had rural clinical experience:

YES
NO

7b. If YES please describe your rural clinical experience: _____

8. Rural clinical placements are relevant in:

- Year 1
- Year 2
- Year 3
- Year 4+

9. My understanding of health issues relating to rural and remote areas is:

- GOOD
- POOR

9b. I would like to learn more about: _____

10. Please name any scholarships you currently hold: _____

11. Please name any scholarships you have applied for: _____

12. Please name any scholarships you have held in the past: _____

13. Rustica has improved my awareness of rural and remote health care issues:

- AGREE
- DISAGREE
- UNSURE

14. I have attended the following:

- First aid on the run course
- Skills night
- Trauma Course
- BBQ
- Scholarships nights
- Electives nights
- Rustica welcome
- Rustica Ball
- Quiz nights
- Health careers camp
- Societies Day
- Continuing Medical Education CME weekend
- Continuing Professional Development weekend
- Agfest
- Adventure camp weekend
- Indigenous weekend
- Cultural awareness session
- Rural Health conference

15. For each you have attended above please provide some brief thoughts about the event: (EG. was it useful, interesting?)

16. I have a rural background:

YES
NO

16b. If YES, has RUSTICA provided support in terms of:

Social networks

YES
NO

Clinical skills

YES
NO

Rural careers information

YES
NO

17 I have attended social functions organised by Rustica:

YES
NO

18 I would like to attend more social functions organised by Rustica:

AGREE
DISAGREE

19 I would like to attend group discussions on relevant rural health issues:

AGREE
DISAGREE

20 I would like to attend lectures by guest speakers on relevant rural health issues:

AGREE
DISAGREE

21. I am aware of the Royal Australian Flying Doctor Service:

AGREE
DISAGREE

22. I would like more information on the RFDS:

AGREE
DISAGREE

23. I am interested in a career with the RFDS in the future:

AGREE
DISAGREE
UNSURE

24. I feel Rustica has provided support (If you are part of the Rural Clinical School):

YES
NO (please explain)

25. What events would be interesting or helpful to you?

26. Is your faculty adequately represented by RUSTICA?

27. How can RUSTICA better support your faculty?

28. Do you know what the National Rural Health Network (NRHN) is?

YES
NO

29. What do you consider is its role?

Any comments or suggestions:
