



Where do they go? Methodology and lessons from collaborative allied health graduate tracking research

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Background

- There is a maldistribution of allied health workforce in rural and regions of Australia
- Little is known about why graduates decide to practise in a rural location
- Influences may include rural origin, rural placement and rural job opportunities

What is this study about?

The **Nursing and Allied Health Graduate Outcomes Tracking (NAHGOT)** study is a joint research project between **Monash University School of Rural Health** and **The University of Newcastle Department of Rural Health** across Victoria and New South Wales.

See: [NAHGOT study website](#)

The aim is ...

... to compare 'preferred practice location' of undergrads with post-graduate 'principal practice location'.

Methods

Design: Longitudinal and cross-sectional data linkage.

Sample: Students enrolled in Nursing & Allied programmes at Monash University (MU) and the University of Newcastle (UON).

Data sources:

- Existing university enrolment and clinical placement data
- Online surveys of Year 1 and Final Year students
- Follow-up graduate surveys up to 10 years
- Access to Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) registration data

Data analysis: Data linkage and comparative analysis.

Significance for Allied Health

- Compares outcomes for all students and graduates.
- Tracks the background, intentions, experience and outcomes for allied health graduates.
- Informs curriculum improvement and workforce planning, particularly for rural and remote regions.

Lessons Learned

Opportunities

- Previously successful collaboration between universities
- Common goal to increase rural allied health workforce
- Wider Faculty support for project and potential study findings
- Adding of tracking questions to SES and GOS* (*SES Student Experience Survey/ GOS Graduate Outcome Survey)

Challenges

- Data linkage across multiple sources
 - Cooperation of admissions and professional placement units
 - Collaborative agreement with AHPRA
 - Database sharing & management
 - Data process and code book changes
- Limitations of online surveys
 - Timing of collection
 - Low response rate
 - Missing data



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