

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Overseas doctors visiting the Huon Valley

The School of Medicine at the University of Tasmania has a long association with the health centres run by the Huon Valley Council at Dover, Geeveston & Cygnet. These facilities take UTAS medical students for clinical placements and field visits to introduce them to health care in Tasmanian rural areas.

The overall goal is to encourage medical students - especially those from the Huon region - to return long term as doctors. This is the so-called 'rural pipeline' effect.

As part of the Huon Valley Council's commitment to medical student training they also take visiting international medical students for short placement at their health facilities. This gives the international students opportunities to observe how rural health is practiced in Australia in some of the most modern and well organised facilities.

One such visiting international student is Fivilia (Fivi) Anjelina Bora who took the opportunity to visit the Cygnet Medical Services and observe the multi-disciplinary health team in action. Fivi, a final year medical student, is from a UTAS partner university in Indonesia: the University of Nus Cendana on the island of West Timor. Her medical school is only eight years old and is the newest of 70 medical schools in Indonesia. They are looking at ways to retain their junior doctors in their rural regions and are hoping to learn how we support rural doctors in the Huon. The ongoing retention of rural doctors is an international problem.

Over the past 3 years the Huon Council has regularly hosted academics, doctors and medical students from this medical school in West Timor and they have come to appreciate and admire how health services are delivered in the Huon. Dean of their Medical School Dr Heru recently said "we want our students to visit the Huon every year, as they have so much to learn."

"The commitment of the Huon Valley Council to supporting international students and doctors shows their support for cultural diversity, international university collaboration and the global quest for long term rural retention of doctors" said Dr Nick Cooling, Director of Electives & Internationalisation at the University of Tasmania.

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