



Media Release

June 14 2017

Longreach doctor awarded for lasting legacy

A LEGENDARY Longreach doctor with medical roots in western Queensland stretching back 60 years this year has been recognised for his meritorious service to rural health.

In 1957, a then two-year-old David Rimmer, the fifth of 10 children, moved to St George with his parents, Drs Bill and Betty Rimmer, who had established a rural general practice in the south-western Queensland farming community.

Six decades later, on Saturday night in Townsville at the Rural Doctors Association of Queensland (RDAQ) conference, 300 of his professional peers and their partners paid tribute to Dr David Rimmer's lasting influence on improved health care models for people living in the bush - particularly those living in the far west of the State that he calls home.

Dr Rimmer said a core philosophy of his medical career had been finding the value in every person in his care.

"I think in many respects RDAQ operates with that same outlook – each person has something of value to offer, which is why it sometimes feels like a family of doctors who care for each other more than a medical organisation," he said.

Dr Rimmer began his medical training in Brisbane and then moved to Victoria to work at Wangaratta and Melbourne Children's hospitals.

Following his interstate service, he completed his Royal Australian College of General Practitioners qualification in Toowoomba, before joining his brother Robert in a new Toowoomba general practice, then moving into emergency medicine at the Mater Hospital in Brisbane.

But the tug of rural life was too strong. He worked at Kowanyama in Cape York for several years before returning to the Wesley in Brisbane to continue emergency medicine, while filling relieving shifts for the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

His last posting was ground staff at Longreach. There his friend and former Toowoomba GP, Dr Dilip Dhupelia, recruited him to the position of executive director of medical services for the Central West Hospital and Health Service.

RDAQ immediate past-president Dr Michael Rice, Beaudesert, said that through characteristic innovation and a contemporary approach to health workforce models, Dr Rimmer had achieved an enviable record of recruiting, training and retaining medical staff in remote Queensland.

“David Rimmer is described as a loving husband, father, grandfather, supervisor, teacher, mentor, and advisor,” Dr Rice said.

“He and his beautiful wife Ann have provided much wisdom, strength and support to many people. It is a rare combination for someone to have such warmth and care, combined with such a sharp logical mind that makes things happen.

“He has worked in, and continues to provide support for those in some of Australia’s toughest working environments.

“He sees the potential in people and pushes them outside of their comfort zone to develop new abilities, and to do the best they can in their role.

“He is a caring, compassionate, and skilled doctor, who has taught generations of doctors, and introduced a number of them to RDAQ to boot.”

More information:

IMAGES *high resolution image/s available from media@rdaq.com.au*

For further information contact:

Executive Officer - Ms Marg Moss 0400 428 213

