

+NEWS |



FREE READ

Health students get taste of North Canterbury



Local Democracy Reporting



0

Monday 9 September 2024, 04:38 PM

3 minutes to Read



Hurunui Mayor Marie Black (third from right) hosted a group of third year medical students in Amberley last month
[Image: Marie Black]



| Local Democracy Reporting

Tertiary health students have been visiting North Canterbury in a bid to promote opportunities in rural areas.

Six Auckland students visited eight schools in Canterbury and Marlborough last week, while Hurunui Mayor Marie Black hosted Otago University students last month.

Recent media reports have highlighted the challenges faced by rural communities around the country in recruiting healthcare workers.

Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network chief executive Dr Grant Davidson said international research shows students from rural areas are more likely to return and serve their communities after graduating.

“It will surprise no one that the workforce crisis in general practice throughout New Zealand is worsening.

“In fact, we in the rural health sector have stopped calling it a crisis and are referring to it as an emergency.”

He said the most sustainable solution is to train more doctors, nurses, and healthcare professionals locally.

Mrs Black said she hoped to see some of the students returning to the district after they graduate.

Last month she hosted third year Otago University medical students in the district, as part of an initiative which has been running for 10 years.

The students visited medical centres, St John, the North Canterbury Rural Support Trust and a local preschool.

“It is encouraging that the health system is providing opportunities for students in rural locations to consider health science as a career pathway.

“These opportunities to understand the challenges and also the advantages of working in a rural setting is encouraging.”

Last week Auckland students took time out from their university holidays to talk to North Canterbury schools about rural health careers.

Organised by Hauora Taiwhenua Rural Health Network, the six students visited Darfield High School, Rolleston College, Ellesmere College (Leeston), Kaiapoi High School, Oxford Area School, Rangiora New Life School, Richmond View School (Blenheim) and Hurunui College (Hawarden).

University of Auckland medical student Hannah Wakelin, who is originally from Ashburton, said she planned to return to the South Island after she graduates.

“Rural communities are so special and they need more resources, so I want to give back.

“I think quite a few people want to come back to rural areas, but we need more.”

Ruby Young, from Timaru, is studying dietetics at Massey University in Auckland, while Aucklander Rubi Afroz is studying to be an oral therapist.

“There’s lots of opportunities. We need lots of young people, especially in rural communities,” Ruby said.

“After graduating, I want to work in rural areas,” Rubi said.

“They don’t have the same resources, so I really want to help them.”

University of Auckland medical student Nico Davies said he was enjoying visiting a part of the country he hadn’t been to before.

“A lot of these students don’t have a connection with university or healthcare, so it is good to connect with them and let them know what opportunities there are.”

LDR is local body journalism co-funded by RNZ and NZ On Air.

Fiona, capture your time to Read, Watch, Listen or Delve by clicking CAPTURE.

CAPTURE

You can view your CAPTURE RECORD here.