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BY MAUSHMI UDAYA KUMAR (RURAL REPRESENTATIVE, MUMUS INC.)
DESIGNED BY ESHA ABRAHAM
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SAMUEL KANG

THANK YOU TO PREVIOUS EDITORS:
GABY BOLTON (5TH EDITION)
MICHAEL BARCLAY (3RD AND 4TH EDITION)
RUTH MCCLEOD (2ND EDITION)
ELLYSIA BOURKE (1ST EDITION)
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Monash Rural Health (MRH) is proud to contribute to and to endorse the 6th edition of the MUMUS MBBS Rural Placement Guide. This guide gives the medical student perspective to rural clinical placements, complementing additional information contained on the MRH website, Facebook page and Moodle.

Undertaking clinical placements through MRH at any of our regional clinical training sites will provide you with exceptional hands-on learning experiences that will provide valuable preparation for postgraduate training and professional practice.

The first rural health academic unit of its kind in Australia, the School of Rural Health was established in 1992. In 2002, through the Rural Clinical Schools program, it enabled the creation of dedicated rural clinical schools, with the establishment of significant tertiary infrastructure in rural Australia and the development of a strong network of academic rural clinicians.

All MRH sites have exceptional facilities, with provision for hosting students across Years A, Year 2, 3B, 4C and 5D. The school is committed to the delivery of excellent regional and rural health education and research programs across the healthcare sector in a vibrant and exciting regional and rural environment that leads to increased retention of healthcare workers.

All MRH clinical training sites are attached to a regional or rural hospital and are partners with a range of general practices and community-based health services. In the north-west MRH offers placements at the two major teaching sites at Mildura and Bendigo, with surrounding towns also involved in 4C placements. Similarly, in the south-east MRH has teaching sites at Traralgon, Warragul, Sale, Bairnsdale and Leongatha as well as extensive placements in surrounding townships. The graduate entry medicine program commences at our MRH Churchill site and includes clinical hospital placements in the south-east at Warragul, Traralgon, Maryvale, Sale, Leongatha and Wonthaggi.

The School and the Faculty are very excited to be offering students a common and consistent regional and rural Year 4C program across the south-east and the north-west from 2019. The common program is based on the successful and popular north-west model that has been in place for many years. Students will complete two 18-week rotations over the year. In the regional hospital rotation students will focus on Women’s Health, Children’s Health and Medicine of the Mind. Primarily students will be guided in their learning by hospital specialists. In the rural practice community rotation students will be embedded in a rural GP practice, and will be able to access the local hospital for other specialty experiences.

Feel free to contact our Rural Health Education Program Office at Clayton in Building 13A (37 Rainforest
Walk) and introduce yourself to Laura Major and the team who will assist with any queries and questions you might have about the training experiences offered at MRH. We look forward to welcoming you to our School.

Associate Professor Shane Bullock, Acting Head of School
Welcome to the MUMUS Rural Guide – a little book aimed at educating students on what life is really like as a medical student outside of the smog ridden, traffic infested suburb that is Clayton!

Whether you have chosen to go rural or have been allocated a rural rotation, you’ll find that most students who come off a rural rotation are extremely happy with their experience and are either excited at the opportunity for further rotations or are sad that they won’t have another chance to go rural!

Briefly, some of the benefits that a rural rotation provides include:
- You can often be first assistant in surgeries, gaining invaluable procedural experience but also valuable one-on-one time with senior clinicians
- You are often seen as an intern or junior member of the team – yes this means you may work harder, but the experience and skills that you get will ensure you hit the ground running in future rotations and even in internship!
- You can be the first responder to medical issues and are often afforded more autonomy and responsibility in managing these issues
- You build amazing connections with the people on your rotation given you live together, unlike in metro rotations where you can be paradoxically isolated from other students who aren’t on the exact same rotation as you
- You build better relationships with your team, often resulting in fantastic opportunities to hang out with your team in social settings
- You can bask in the chiller rural lifestyle, separating yourself from the business of metro and focusing on yourself

One concern that some students have is they feel they may become isolated from the various academic, social and well-being initiatives that are available to metro students. Fear not however:
- Our academic events are all streamed online and we have endeavoured to minimize any technical difficulties, as well as ensuring we have back-up plans if our stream does run into issues
- Our 4C revision lectures have been converted to revision weekends, allowing rural students to attend in person
- We are encouraging all sub-committees to either live-stream or hold their events on weekends to allow for rural engagement
- Our major social events (such as MedBall) are held on Saturdays, while some of our social events are created with the rural cohort at heart (such as Wildfire Bendigo Ball and the Gippsland Ball)
- Our Get-A-GP guide is brimming with resources you can utilise as a rural student. Whether it be a rural GP or counselling services who are willing to come to you in your rural setting, we’ve got you covered
- Our AMSA ThinkTanks are also held in rural areas in order to capture the voices and opinions of all those who we advocate for
- Our rural representative, Maushmi, is one of the friendliest humans you’ll ever meet and is always ready, able and willing to answer any questions you have.
- I look forward to hearing about your experiences in the rural setting and am confident you will come out the other end yearning for more.

As always if you have any questions you can email me at any time on president@mumus.org.

Best,

Pedram Rajabifard, MUMUS President
Wildfire is a rural health club affiliated with Monash University, which aims to support students from medicine, nursing, and allied health degrees. We aim to support students who are passionate about rural and Indigenous health and to promote working in regional/rural areas of Australia. With support from the Department of Health, Monash University, and under The National Rural Health Students’ Network (NRHSN); Wildfire runs several academic and social activities throughout the year. Some of the big events to look out for include:

- **Matthew Campbell Memorial Evening (MCME)**
  An exciting forum, offering opportunity to discuss and learn about some of the health issues facing Indigenous Australians with spectacular food and entertainment.

- **Clinical Skills Weekends**
  A highly sought after opportunity to develop clinical skills such as cannulation, suturing, intubation, and more in state-of-the-art facilities.

- **Bendigo and Gippsland Balls**
  Premier social events at fantastic locations with high quality food, music, and entertainment.

- **Careers Day**
  An event shared with students from La Trobe University, Deakin University, and The University of Melbourne. Discover what opportunities there are in working in regional/rural settings as a health professional.

In addition to these big event we have much more opportunities to get involved throughout the year with trivia nights, social gatherings, high school visits, and much more. For those with a passion for rural health we can also support students through placement grants and opportunities as well as conference funding in association with The Rural Workforce Agency of Victoria (RWAV).

Most of our events are run by our amazing subcommittees that are found across Victoria in the following areas, please enquire about your local team to learn more:
- Bendigo
- Clayton
- Gippsland
- Mildura
- Parkville

For students with a keen interest in rural and Indigenous health; Wildfire offers the ability to develop leadership, teamwork and communication skills. Beyond just the potential to network with leading rural and Indigenous ambassadors, it is the chance to make a meaningful impact on the health disparity between rural and metropolitan Australians.
Please visit our website (http://www.wildfirerhc.org/), check out our Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/WildfireRHC/) or email us (wildfire@wildfirerhc.org) if you have any questions or would like to get involved.

James O'Sullivan
Wildfire President
Each year when clinical site placements are released there are always questions regarding the system used to allocate students, so here is an overview of the Faculty’s allocation process.

Though we do offer students the opportunity to preference sites, some sites are more in demand than others, so not everyone will get their top preference/s and in some instances students will be allocated to a regional/rural site. With this information, come preference time, students will be able to make the most informed choices for the following clinical year.

For ERC students
For those students going into Year 3B there are two choices – Bendigo and Mildura. As an ERC student, there is an expectation that you will spend time in both Mildura and Bendigo across Years 3B and 4C.

Regarding 4C regional hospital rotations - if you are placed in Mildura for 3B, unless you choose to stay on in Mildura for 4C, MRH will endeavour to place you in Bendigo for one semester in 4C for your regional hospital rotation, should you preference in this way. As already mentioned, there are no guarantees.

Regarding 4C rural practice community rotations – Murray, Highlands, and Goldfields regions (Swan Hill, Woodend, Gisborne, Maryborough, Kyneton and Castlemaine) – these are all north-west rotations managed by MRH in Bendigo. Even though the Murray region is geographically closer to Mildura, it is still considered a MRH Bendigo-managed rotation, as are the more proximal Highland and Goldfields regions. As such, students who were placed in Mildura in 3B, although they will most likely be allocated a semester in Bendigo (should they preference in this way), have an equal likelihood of being allocated for their other semester in the Murray region as they have to being placed in the Highlands or Goldfields regions (preferences are taken into consideration).

Regarding both ERC and non ERC students in the north-west, Faculty-approved special consideration cases are allocated first and foremost, followed by students who have committed to 24 months in rural in that region, followed by students who might be repeating a year and need to be at the same site as the previous year, with the remaining spots then allocated via a computer-generated algorithm which is based on student preferences.

For all students preferencing regional/rural placements
Importantly in submitting your preferences, you need to be aware that there can be no guarantees of placement for first (or in some instances second) preference, limited places mean that there is a high likelihood of being allocated to a lower preference. Before submitting your preferences familiarise yourself with the information in this guidebook to better understand all sites on offer.
Special Consideration
At the time of submitting your regional/rural site preferences, you will have the opportunity to report special circumstances that you wish to be considered during the allocation process. Supporting documentation MUST be uploaded when submitting your site preferences, otherwise, your request will NOT be considered.

There have been rumours over the years that special consideration cases have been approved that do not fit the criteria outlined by the Faculty. Although students may submit requests that do not fit special consideration criteria, these are not approved for manual allocation. There is a chance that those with so-called ‘rejected’ requests will be allocated by the system to one of their higher site preferences, however this is purely coincidental. All applications for special consideration must be supported by evidence, will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and decisions made at the sole discretion of the Faculty. An application for special consideration does not constitute automatic guarantee of first preference in allocation of a placement. It is merely one component of the consideration that is given in allocating that student.

The following circumstances may be considered in allocation decisions:
- Major health problems requiring frequent and ongoing specialised treatment that is only available in certain locations.
- Being a parent of a dependent child or children.
- Being a registered carer for a sick relative or dependent.
- Being part of the Team Monash Elite Student Performer Scheme requiring location in a particular area.

The following circumstances are not considered in allocation decisions:
- Lack of access to a motor vehicle or inability to drive.
- Other transportation issues, including time and costs.
- Relationships without dependents.
- Ownership or rental of accommodation in a particular location.
- Other accommodation issues.
- Employment and other extra-curricular activities.
- Existing or planned research commitments.

When Year 2/A students submit rural site preferences for 3B, you will be asked whether you have an interest in spending 24 months at a rural site (ERC not included). If you select ‘yes’, when it is time to submit regional/rural site preferences for 4C, if you wish to remain at the same site or in the same region, you may be able to do so should you preference in this way. However, if you did select ‘yes’, however change your mind and wish to preference a metro placement in 4C or a different regional/rural site, you will need to clearly indicate this when initially selecting ‘rural’ or ‘metro’ via the central preference system.
Finally, the process of regional/rural site allocation is handled in a completely transparent manner, free of all external influence, personal or otherwise. As such, pre-preferencing or post-allocation meetings with the Rural Health Education Manager - or any other members of the Faculty - will not influence the final result in any way. The online placement system algorithm is programmed to allocate students to their highest possible preference, and the allocation results are fixed, notwithstanding the need for manual allocation for Faculty-approved special consideration cases.

Laura Major
School of Rural Health
Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences
Please note that the student descriptions for the 4C southwest rural sites may differ from the experience of past students due to the changes to the rural program for 4C starting in 2019. All rural students will now have the option to individually preference their preferred site for their Regional Hospital Rotation and Rural Practice Community Rotation.

Students have the option to preference:

**18 week Regional Hospital Rotation**
- Mildura
- Bendigo
- Traralgon
- Warragul
- Sale

**18 week Rural Practice Community Rotation**
- Southern Beaches: Wonthaggi, Leongatha, Foster
- Strzelecki: Traralgon, Warragul, Trafalgar, Drouin, Moe
- Wellington: Sale, Maffra, Heyfield
- Gippsland Lakes: Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance, Orbost
- Murray: Swan Hill
- Highlands: Gisborne, Woodend
- Goldfields: Maryborough, Kyneton, Castlemaine
Bendigo is a large regional city (pop. 112,000) situated about 150kms from Melbourne. It offers a contemporary lifestyle with many cafes and restaurants, Bendigo Art Gallery, Ulumburra Theatre and a range of sporting clubs. There are two main hospitals, Bendigo Health and St John of God Bendigo. The new Bendigo Hospital opened in January 2017 with new facilities: 372 inpatient beds, 72 same-day beds, 11 new operating theatres, a regional cancer centre, an 80-bed integrated mental health facility and a mother-and-baby unit. A multi-story carpark and helipad will be opened August 2018. St John of God have also undergone extensions and has increased capacity by 50%. There are also an extensive range of community health services too.

Curriculum

Year 3B
Year 3B students with Monash Rural Health (MRH) Bendigo are based at the Bendigo Hospital for the full academic year. The program is integrated with the University of Melbourne’s Year 2 MD program to form the NVRMEN (Northern Victoria Rural Medical Education Network) Foundation Clinical Year. Students undertake an orientation program incorporating intensive basic clinical skills refinement prior to four eight-week rotations through medicine, surgery, ambulatory care and specialties.

The emphasis of the program is the development and refinement of basic and procedural clinical skills, core clinical knowledge and clinical reasoning. Students participate in a mixture of individual, small group, ad hoc and whole group teaching sessions with direct interaction with senior clinicians across a wide variety of medical and surgical specialties. This is complemented by weekly teaching scenarios in the clinical skills and simulation centre.

Year 4C
Year 4C in the north west consists of two parts: a semester-long rural rotation with our MRH Bendigo Hubs (Goldfields, Highlands & Murray) and a semester-long regional rotation in either the MRH Mildura or Bendigo sites. Bendigo hosts all Year 4C students for an orientation week.

During the regional rotation students have extensive exposure to the core disciplines of Year 4C: children’s health, women’s health and psychiatry. The platform for integrating and embedding specialist knowledge and skills is the one-day-per-week GP placement with parallel consulting alongside the student’s GP supervisor. This allows for consolidation and integration of these disciplines. Students have learning opportunities with paediatricians, obstetricians and gynaecologists, psychiatrists and general practitioners, and the teams of practitioners, nurses and allied health professionals who work with them.

During the rural rotation, students are allocated to hubs either in the Goldfields (Castlemaine or Maryborough), the Highlands (Gisborne or Woodend) and Murray region (Swan Hill). Students are
immersed into a busy and intensive general practice setting where they will have the opportunity to see their own patients both in the general practice and with clinicians in the hospital and community setting. This longitudinal experience provides the opportunity for students to gain continuous hands-on experience in primary care practice while reinforcing their learning in children’s health, women’s health and psychiatry in a different health care setting.

Year 5D
MRH Bendigo offers the core Year 5D rotations (emergency medicine, aged care, general medicine and general surgery) as well as a range of specialties and electives at Bendigo Health.

Accommodation
We have a 48-bed accommodation block with shared bathrooms and six communal kitchens. In the same vicinity of this accommodation block, we have a new 15-bed refurbishment, again with shared bathrooms and kitchens. You need to bring your own linen (sheets, mattress protector, doona, pillow and towels) and personal items. The kitchen equipment supplied varies depending on your length of stay (students staying for a short time tend to have more things supplied). We also accommodate students in rental properties around Bendigo. All of our accommodation is within 30 minutes’ walk to the Bendigo hospital (parking around the hospital can be difficult). An accommodation rental fee is charged weekly.

Lifestyle
Bendigo's location in Central Victoria means that it has prime positioning to all that the state has to offer. It is two hours’ drive to Melbourne or the beach or the snow. Within Bendigo itself are a range of cultural organisations (such as the Bendigo Symphony Orchestra) and sporting clubs (including hockey, netball and soccer). Bendigo’s size means that it can support more eclectic interests as well including Lion dancing, archery and yachting. The city has festivals or activities on most weekends, and you can always find a great place for coffee or to eat.

Things to do
Considering joining a club? Consult the City of Greater Bendigo’s community or ask any staff member what is available locally. Many of the faculty and the clinicians who are your teachers also belong to community organisations and will be happy to share contact details.

Monash Rural Health Churchill delivers Year A of the four-year graduate entry medical program. Co-located with the Gippsland campus of Federation University, Monash Rural Health Churchill offers complete library services, a clinical skills simulation environment and close ties with practicing clinicians. We also have partnerships with health and community support agencies throughout Gippsland.

The Campus is located at Churchill in the Latrobe Valley, just two hours from Melbourne at the foot of the Strzelecki Ranges. The town population at the last census was 4,568 in 2016. The campus is within easy driving distance to a number of popular tourist destinations that offer beach, snow, bushwalking and gourmet food activities. Tourist destinations include Victoria’s Wilson’s Promontory, Gippsland Lakes and Mt Baw Baw ski resort.

Curriculum overview

Year A is the sole pre-clinical year in Monash’s graduate entry medicine program. Basic professional, biomedical, social and behavioural concepts are introduced and developed. The content and learning is contextualised with clinical connections and there is an emphasis on rural medicine. Clinical and communication skills are developed. Students undertake early clinical placements in hospitals within a few weeks of starting the course and also complete a community agency placement during the year.

The Year A program has embraced an active learning approach. There is a mix of discussion-based, online and face-to-face, large- and small-group learning. The timetable allows for directed self-learning and students are encouraged to form informal study groups to facilitate learning. Senior medical students in the region are keen to support Year A students in their learning through mentoring and student-led tutorials.

Students are required to travel to the Clayton campus 13-14 times during the year, making their own travel arrangements. Classes at the Clayton campus include anatomy, histology, ethics, and medical law as well as other selected areas of content.

Accommodation

Students studying at Monash Rural Health Churchill have access to, and are encouraged to apply for, accommodation provided by Federation University Australia at Churchill. A number of accommodation options are available.

FedUni living recognise that everyone has different living requirements, preferences and tastes. At the Gippsland Campus, a number of accommodation choices are available, with an option to suit everyone.

A wide range of facilities and common spaces are available for Gippsland residents including fitness, recreation and entertainment, tennis and basketball courts, vegetable gardens and fruit trees, recreation halls and so much more!
For more information contact FedUni living on +61 3 5122 6236 or via their email - feduniliving@federation.edu.au

For a list of "Items provided and what to bring list" please view the pdf available in the Frequently Asked Questions; https://federation.edu.au/about-us/facilities-and-services/campus-life/accommodation/additional-information/faqs

**Lifestyle**
In Churchill, a number of stores are available;

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<tr>
<td>Woolworths Supermarket</td>
<td>Ritchie's IGA supermarket</td>
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<td>Commonwealth Australia Bank</td>
<td>KFC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia Post</td>
<td>Hazelwood Health Service</td>
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<td>Latrobe Community Health Service</td>
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<td>Newsagency</td>
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<td>The Barber Shed</td>
<td>New Churchill Motors</td>
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<td>Churchill Hot Bread</td>
<td>Churchill Chinese</td>
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<td>Churchill Fish &amp; Chips</td>
<td>Churchill Noodle Bar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Churchill BBQ &amp; Roasts</td>
<td>Churchill Pizza HQ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Churchill Hotel</td>
<td>Lifeline Gippsland Op Shop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Churchill (United) Petrol Station</td>
<td>Churchi Laundry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pooh Corner Child Minding Centre (Latrobe City)</td>
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Larger Cities such as Morwell and Traralgon are only 15-20 mins away by car or Latrobe Valley (LV) Bus Lines

**Things to do**

Mathison Park: Close to Churchill is Mathison Park, with walking tracks around Lake Hyland. Remote Control Model Power Boat Drivers Stand was built in 1996. A variety of trees and plants are being planted. This has now been enhanced with the walking path and fishing decks that were completed in 2005. The Lake continually has fish added to the eco-system for recreational fishing.

**Churchill Senior Basketball Association:** [http://websites.sportstg.com/assoc_page.cgi?c=1-10347-0-0-0&a=COMPS&seasonID=4349630](http://websites.sportstg.com/assoc_page.cgi?c=1-10347-0-0-0&a=COMPS&seasonID=4349630)
Situated in the southern and eastern corner of Victoria, East and South Gippsland boasts natural landscapes and unparalleled beauty. Travel either 2 hours south or 3 hours east from Melbourne and you will be met with unspoilt beaches, farm-fresh produce and picturesque lakes, rivers and mountain ranges.

Monash Rural Health in East Gippsland and South Gippsland has three main teaching sites situated within this magnificent region at Bairnsdale (est. population 13,240), Sale (est. population 14,716) and Leongatha (est. population 3,322). All three sites are within the grounds of their rural hospitals. Placement sites outside the main teaching sites such as Wonthaggi, Foster, and Orbost also have direct access to the rural hospital in these towns allowing easy access to clinical placements for students, the hospitals are also training sites for Interns and Registrars.

The rural hospitals that you have access to during placement into this region provide a broad range of specialty services including but not limited to:

- General Medicine
- Obs and Gyn
- Dialysis
- Ophthalmology
- Allied Health
- Cardiology
- General Surgery
- Paediatrics
- Oncology
- Radiology
- Orthopaedics
- ENT
- Mental Health
- Geriatrics
- Urology
- Anaesthetics

All of these hospitals support a mix of specialist and procedural rural general practitioner services, with obstetric and anaesthetic care provided predominantly by GP obstetricians and GP anaesthetists respectively.

**Curriculum**

**Year 3B**

Year 3B at Sale will be a cohort of 8 students. Students participate in group learning activities at Central Gippsland Health Service that include clinical bedside teaching, ward and operating theatre experience, anaesthetic rotations, PBL tutorials and theme-based teaching. Students spend nine weeks in each discipline rotating over the two semesters, and attend ward rounds and clinical teaching within the hospital on a daily basis. This provides students with lots of hands on clinical exposure that allows development of their clinical and decision-making skills whilst under direct supervision of interns, registrars and consultants.

The students’ clinical experience is complemented by skill-based training in the simulation laboratories, at the school’s sites.
The opportunity to undertake research projects is available for interested students and will be supported by local research staff.

**Year 4C**
In Year 4C we place students in rural practice community rotations at Southern Beaches (Wonthaggi, Leongatha and Foster), Wellington (Sale, Maffra and Heyfield) and Gippsland Lakes (Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance and Orbost). A regional hospital rotation at Sale hospital is also available for students in Year 4C.

**Accommodation**
Student accommodation is modern 2-4-bedroom shared house/units close to the hospitals, training sites or clinics in your region.

Houses are fully furnished (BYO all bathroom and bedding linen to suit a double or single bed, depending on location) and include gardening, house maintenance, capped utilities with more than adequate internet for a low weekly charge. (Unlimited wireless internet is available at all Monash education sites)

Travel is a consideration when choosing any rural placement and can be difficult without a reliable vehicle.

**Things To Do**
Geographically East and South Gippsland is varied. As a key nature based tourism destination, the region offers exceptional access to popular visitor destinations from the snowfields at Mt. Hotham, the largest inland Lakes system in the Southern Hemisphere in East Gippsland, to the rugged Coastline of Wilsons Prom and everything in between. Students have the opportunity to experience a variety of activities like:

- Canoeing, Kayaking & Rafting
- Horse Riding
- Bushwalking
- Arts, Culture & Heritage
- Food & Wine
- Snow Sports
- Parks and Wilderness Tours
- Motorcycling
- Caving
- Boating & Sailing
- Golf
- Cycling
- Cruisers Iconic Destinations
- Fishing
- Camping
- Touring (Driving) 4WD - AWD
- Water Sports
- Shopping
- Café’s
- Restaurants
- Wineries

When venturing into East and South Gippsland’s Mother Nature you may spot, kangaroos, koalas, seals, dolphins, wallabies and many unique bird and reptile species.

Summary
Feedback from past students highlights the advantages of our program: hands-on clinical experience, community involvement, opportunities to follow pregnant women from antenatal visits through to delivery, no competition in the hospital environment, unprecedented access to tutors and clinicians, small group tutorials and the development of long-term friendships and professional relationships with peers, supervisors and hospital and practice staff.

It’s interesting to note the most common comment from our students after the first month is “I am so glad that not everyone knows how good this place is or I may not have had the opportunity to come”; our program has also achieved assessment results at least equal to if not better than, other faculty programs.

All our programs are supported by a number of highly experienced local clinicians; students are supported by an academic coordinator and an experienced administration team at each of our sites, to ensure that all students have a supported and positive learning experience.

To find out more, visit our website: http://med.monash.edu.au/srh/eastgippsland/index.html
Monash Rural Health in Latrobe Valley and West Gippsland comprises the clinical teaching sites at Latrobe Regional Hospital (LRH) in Traralgon and West Gippsland Healthcare Group (WGHG) in Warragul, and general practices throughout the region. LRH is located 150km east of Melbourne and is Gippsland’s regional specialist referral and trauma centre. LRH provides general and acute medical, surgical, orthopaedic, paediatric, obstetric, gynaecological, rehab, cancer care, mental health, emergency, high dependency, sub-acute, aged care and allied health services. West Gippsland Healthcare Group (WGHG) includes an 80-bed hospital, two aged care facilities, and four community health centres. WGHG provides acute medical, surgical, paediatric, obstetric, emergency, high dependency, sub-acute, aged care and community based health services.

Curriculum
Year 3B
The 3B curriculum in Traralgon and Warragul focuses on the fundamentals of medicine and surgery. The timetable includes structured learning opportunities such as PBLs, pathology & pharmacology tutorials, bedside tutorials, clinical skills sessions and specialist masterclasses with physicians and surgeons; as well as time for study and self-directed learning in the hospital. Students are encouraged to spend as much time as possible on the wards, consolidating their clinical skills. Year 3B students from Traralgon and Warragul often participate in activities together at either site, and videoconferencing is utilised where possible.

Year 4C
The Year 4C program in this region is comprised of regional hospital rotations and rural practice community rotations. Rural practice community rotations take place in the Strzelecki region consisting of Traralgon, Warragul, Trafalgar, Drouin and Moe. Teaching occurs in both Warragul and Traralgon with structured tutorials, videoconferences and specialist teaching complementing the hands-on opportunities offered by the hospitals.

Accommodation
Clean and comfortable fully furnished 4-bedroom share houses are available for 3B and 4C students. Located in close proximity to the hospitals or general practices, students need only to supply their own linen and food. 1000GB of Wi-Fi / month is provided for each house.

Things To Do
Traralgon and Warragul are vibrant growing towns with the full range of dining, social, sporting, entertainment and community facilities. There are many award-winning wineries in close proximity to the towns and the region is renowned for its easy access to the snowfields, wilderness, rainforests and beaches. For more information visit:
www.destinationgippsland.com.au
BENDIGO - YEAR 3B

Curriculum

Bendigo has a unique setup, with both Monash University students and University of Melbourne students forming the Foundation Clinical Year (FCY). This in turn comes under the ‘umbrella’ of the Northern Victoria Regional Medical Education Network (NVRMEN) - essentially, the Monash centres of the North-West. There isn’t too much of a difference in the way things are run between the universities - there are a few classes which each university requires students to attend, but most of the rest of the classes are shared. I have found it quite useful, as the Melbourne students will approach some aspects of medicine differently (different OSCE setup, etc.). This allows us to discuss differences in the approaches and work out what works best for the individual student.

There are various rotations throughout the year, which are categorised into four groups: Ambulatory, Medical, Specialty, and Surgery. Each of these rotations lasts for 8 weeks, and within these rotations are ‘sub-rotations’, which generally last for 2-4 weeks. So, on the Medical rotation, you’ll spend 2 weeks in Cardiology, 2 weeks in AMU, and 4 weeks in General Medicine.

Once you’ve done your placement for the day (will usually start between 7-8:30am depending which rotation you’re on), which are quite variable in their length, you’ll most likely have classes in the afternoon. Most of our days finished somewhere between 5:30pm and 7:00pm.

The simulation lab is fantastic - the coordinators are helpful and happy to help if you need to refine your skills, and are great to talk with if you’re struggling with proficiency, etc. It’s very well set-up as well - hi-tech mannequins, dummy arms, etc.

Accommodation

Most students will stay at Lister House - the Monash/Melbourne dormitory in Bendigo. We had most Monash students stay there, and some Melbourne students too - many of the Melbourne students also have secondary jobs and families and so stay elsewhere. There will also be 5th year students who rotate through Lister every 6 or so weeks - they’re great to approach if you’re keen for some extra teaching. It’s about a 15-20 minute walk to the hospital from Lister, probably about 10-15 minute drive (depending on how lucky you are with parking), and a 5 minute bike ride (there’s a bike lockup at the hospital).

Things to Do

As a town of 112,000 people, there’s lots to do in Bendigo! If you’ve never been before, it’s worth checking out the range of tourist attractions Bendigo has to offer - the goldmines, the art gallery, the old cable trams, Lake Weeroona, and many more.

Bendigo has lots of cafes - The Good Loaf, which is inside the School of Rural Health (Monash building...
just beside the hospital), sports some fantastic pumpkin bread and many other tasty treats, and has a larger café in town. The Wholefoods store in town (just opposite Coles) also has some great meals and coffee. The Rifle is one of the many pubs in town, just around the corner from Lister house (about a 2 minute walk).

If you’re keen on the arts, the Bendigo art gallery houses some quality pieces, and has great exhibits, which will pop up throughout the year. The Bendigo Symphony Orchestra is also in town, and will put on a variety of performances throughout the year (Mozart’s Flute Concerto in D and Haydn’s London Symphony no. 104 were played this year). There are a number of music festivals throughout the year, with Groovin’ the Moo being one of the more prominent festivals. If you are interested in theatre, there are a variety of opportunities to get involved with!

The sporting community in Bendigo is very strong, with many netball, soccer and football teams. Last year, Lister students made a mixed netball team for a bit of fun, and many students will also go to the badminton courts every week and spend a bit of time relaxing there. The Queen Victoria oval is just around the corner from Lister house as well, there’s lots of jogging/running tracks, there are many walking spots (Lake Weeroona is fantastic!) - all around, Bendigo offers a wide variety of sport and exercise opportunities.

Shopping is a breeze in Bendigo - there are Coles and Woolworths close by (5 minute drive), and Aldi is approximately 10 minutes away. There are all the necessary amenities in Bendigo, many boutique stores, and a nice variety of book stores as well!

All up, Bendigo offers many experiences and opportunities, fine food, and is a great place to live!

Written by Nathan Dalton
MILDURA - YEAR 3B

Curriculum
The Year 3B cohort comprises of 15 students. Clinical tutorials, bedside teaching, PBLs and theme-based teaching occurs within small groups. Ward rounds are conducted as pairs, which include rotations in various specialties, particularly general medicine and general surgery. Each placement allows students to engage in both ward-based duties and operating theatre experience, all of which are essential for universal Year 3B learning. Tutorials taught within the classroom are complimented and consolidated by hospital experience, enabling further development of preclinical content and enhancing applicability of the knowledge learnt in a clinical context.

The Year 3B cohort is divided into 2 groups that rotate between general medicine and general surgery rosters. Most weekday mornings consist of ward rounds, with the afternoon occupied by interactive tutorials. Usually, one afternoon is kept vacant (generally Fridays) to allow for additional hospital experience or extra-curricular activities. At Mildura Base Hospital, students are not just considered to be “on rotation” but actually considered a part of the team - their values are deemed equally important and are encouraged to voice questions, concerns or opinions they have while on placement. Junior and senior medical staff are constantly looking for students to assist with and perform medical procedures, enhancing clinical skills and providing invaluable bedside exposure.

One of the unique amenities of doing placements in Mildura is the clinical skills program offered. As Year 3B students, it is vital to practice and perfect basic procedural abilities – such as cannulation, venepunctures and catheterisations – which can be difficult to perform initially. To assist, the School of Rural Health provides all required equipment, anatomically-accurate manikins and OSCE-approved instructions at all times for students to practice. Additionally, SimMan 3G sessions are regularly scheduled into Year 3B timetables, where experienced clinicians run real-life scenarios, allowing students to independently tackle clinical situations and receive feedback on their performance.

Year 3B is often associated with significant challenges - moving away from home, studying in a new environment, financial stresses, maintaining an adequate work-life balance, whilst also trying to keep up with your favourite television series. Fortunately, the administrative team and counsellors at Mildura School of Rural Health are superheroes in disguise that can offer you all the help you may need no matter what your circumstances are. They are both professionally and socially equipped to handle mental health issues, assist with government forms as well as keep you up to date with the latest gossip around town. Regular meetings with the coordinators, open-door policies with the counsellor and approachability make the Mildura team almost feel like a second family.

There is no doubt that Mildura offers Year 3B students all the support and educational resources they need to not just score exceptionally on examinations, but also become incredible specialists.

Accommodation
Students are mostly placed in 3/4 person houses around a 5-minute drive from the hospital and 10
minutes from the town centre. Parking is no issue though, literally across the street from the hospital. The houses are spacious and new, in good condition, and stocked to the gills with all the cooking implements, cutlery, and other necessities you could ask for. They also have excellent air conditioning for the hot summer months and heating for the cold winter nights.

**Things to do:**
Between classes, there are plenty of activities that Mildura has to offer. Have a big break between your ward rounds and the next tutorial? Take a short trip down to Copenhagen with your ward buddy for some midday ice-cream or light up your Friday nights by heading down to the local clubs and bars, many of which are just walking distance from home. For quieter evenings, jog over to the local dog park to meet the furry locals. Even the riverside is a perfect location for a casual picnic with your Mildura crew. From regular brunches at The Wooden Door to celebratory dinners at Stefano’s, Mildura delivers both culinary variety and exquisite scenery for any social gathering.

*Written by Tushar Goyal, reviewed by Varsh Kularadhan*
**SALE – YEAR 3B**

**Curriculum**
The Sale 3B cohort consists of ten students, which means lots of opportunities and getting your logbooks completed without any stress, with procedural teachings also covered very early on. The rotations for each semester include 6 weeks on both General Medicine and Surgery with the rest of the semester on anaesthetics, ED, outpatients, chemotherapy/dialysis as well as the hospital GP. You’re often the only student(s) on a rotation, which can be scary, but the consultants and registers are very keen to teach and include you.

Even though you don’t get to see some weird and wonderful diseases, all the core material is covered and the rest is made up with fantastic pathology teaching and videoconference access to all Gippsland lectures. There is a lot of learning opportunities onsite with local consultants, weekly grand rounds (free breakfast included), 5th year tutors and the registers are always happy to run tutorials too. The PBLs are also a great way to learn as you cover most of the matrix in an interactive setting and the PBL tutors are great.

You’ll also go to Traralgon approximately once a month for mega-days that include law & ethics and neurology. These days are fun and great to catch up with your peers from other sites.

The Sale hospital has its very own library with a great selection of textbooks, computers and importantly, 24-hour access. The librarian Helen is also very helpful, especially with assignment tips and will always be happy to chat to you about your day.

**Things to do in Sale**
You can’t miss Thursday nights at the Star Hotel for Trivia. While some got around the 2 for 1 pots and the yummy wedges, it’s also a great opportunity to spend time with your fellow peers for a bit of a fun and to tap into your inner DJ in the music trivia round. You can also get around mixed netball which plays outdoor competitions on Wednesday nights which is great way to get some forced exercise and a break from the books. Both trivia and netball are also great ways to get to know the 4C students. Some great walks include Lake Guthridge and Sale Common Nature Conservation Reserve. It’s about a 20-minute drive to the beach and a few hours to Mount Hotham if you want to hit the slopes in winter.

And most importantly some good places for coffee include Mister Raymond and Hunting Ground in town, but there is a free Nescafe coffee machine in the hospital cafeteria which is a godsend on days you are strapped for cash or want to smash down four coffees a day. They also serve a great variety for breakfast and lunch with hot buffet options and cheap sandwiches too. If you are looking for some extra cash, then there are plenty of opportunities to tutor local high school students. Tutoring is high in demand and very flexible between placement hours.
Accommodation

Monash provide 4-5 bedroom houses that are shared between other medical students. They are within a 5-minute drive to the Hospital. The closeness of the hospital is complemented by a single once-a-week payment inclusive for furniture, rent, bills and maintenance. This means that no one has to worry about mowing the lawns and therefore your Sundays can be free to explore Sale. If you prefer to rent privately, it is quite easy to find a house that is within a 10-minute drive to the hospital. The rent and bills are still affordable and it’s a great option if you already have your housemates worked out.

Written by Melissa Bruerton reviewed by Olivia Ferretti
Curriculum
With a cohort size of just 24 students, Traralgon provides amazing learning opportunities for year 3B students. The School of Rural Health (SRH) staff at Latrobe Regional Hospital (LRH) is friendly and extremely approachable. They do their best to ensure that learning experience is good. The hospital staff is warm too. They are keen on teaching and supervising students for procedures. The relatively low ratio of student to doctor means that teaching is not hampered by the number of students.

A typical day in Traralgon for year 3B consists of ward-based activities in the morning and class-based teaching in the afternoon. During the 18-week semester, students get rostered onto 6-week rotations for General Medicine and 3 or 4-week rotations for General Surgery. The rest of the time is spent on miscellaneous rotations such as dialysis, anaesthetics, critical care unit etc. On general medicine, students are expected to attend ward rounds and learn by seeing patients. Students have many opportunities to see patients, practice histories and examination skills as well as procedures such as cannulation and taking blood. When on surgery, students can go to theatre and scrub in. They usually attend endoscopies and general surgeries such as thyroid and abdominal ones.

Students have bedside tutorials with consultants in groups of 6. Afternoon lectures are also given by consultants or surgeons. At LRH, students are taught clinical skills such as basic life support, plastering and rectal exam in a stimulated setting. Regular teaching and revision sessions are organised by the SRH so that students can perfect their skills.

Accommodation
Monash University guarantees accommodation for every rural student who applies for it. The houses are usually 4-bedroom ones. They are neat and cosy. The house is shared among medical students. Rent in Traralgon is significantly cheaper than in Melbourne. It includes utilities and internet. The hospital is a 10-minute drive from the houses provided by Monash. Having a car is highly recommended but not necessary. Although public transport is not as reliable as in Melbourne, some students manage to get around town without driving. Traralgon has all the facilities that are needed for everyday living – recreational parks, gyms, shopping centres, restaurants, car maintenance.

Social Life

Things to do
There are many things to do in and around Traralgon. For those who do not head back to Melbourne over the weekend, there are a few cosy cafes in the town centre – The Three Little Birds, MOMO, Onyx Cafe by Chrissys Organics. Gippsland region is also popular for food and winery. Foodies will enjoy their time in Traralgon. There are also many parks that are a short drive away: Morwell National Park, Traralgon Creek Track and Wilsons Promontory. The drive to the scenic town of Wallahla is 40 minutes by car. Lake’s Entrance is another popular destination in the region.

The cohort in Traralgon is very supportive and friendly. Everyone gets along very well. The group often
goes out on outings, for movies or brunch and play netball together. This makes year 3B an enjoyable and special one at Traralgon.

By Akshay Veer Mookoollall  reviewed by Hamza Ashraf
WARRAGUL – YEAR 3B

Curriculum
Throughout the year, you will rotate through areas of the hospital and surrounding facilities that give you experience in a variety of specialities. This includes: general medicine, surgery, theatre, emergency department, haemodialysis, surgical consulting suites, radiology, endoscopy, endocrinology clinic, oncology clinic, anaesthesatics, spirometry clinics, palliative care, and Maryvale Private Hospital. Oftentimes, the doctors and surgeons you meet on these rotations will act as your instructors in tutorials throughout the year. The perks of being at a smaller hospital become apparent here as you often get one-on-one time with a consultant in the clinic, are usually the only student in theatre, and have plenty of opportunities to do hands-on practical skills like cannulation and venepuncture. This makes getting tasks signed off in your logbook relatively easy.

The clinical educators are very accessible and often available when you need help or supervision with clinical skills on the ward. The administrative staff at both Warragul and Traralgon are very approachable and happy to help with any questions or concerns. Dr. John Scarlett, the academic coordinator at Warragul, is also very friendly and willing to answer questions about content and approaches to studying for the year.

More formal teaching happens in a variety of formats, including problem-based learning, patient case studies, bedside tutorials, clinical skills workshops, in-person lectures, and video-conferenced lectures with Traralgon. For pathology, clinical pharmacology, ethics, law, and some specialty days, you will have to drive to Traralgon, but the small group facilitates easy carpooling and the university provides a travel bursary. There are also optional meetings and seminars that you can attend with hospital staff to learn more about or further consolidate concepts. VESPA nights run by fifth years at Traralgon are also a great way to revise and practise skills for the year.

Accommodation
Options for accommodation include applying through Monash for subsidised housing, or renting a house privately. The former option is very affordable at $105 per person per week, which includes all the bills (electricity, water, and internet) for the house. The rooms come with a bed (all so far have been double), bedside table, lamp, desk, and a chair. The common areas are fully furnished, including kitchen utensils. Though you may wish to purchase additional furniture (in addition to bedding, towels, etc), the house comes with most items that you will need. All houses are less than a 5 minute drive from the hospital and some are walking distance. Private housing costs on average $320 per week, with the additional need to arrange bills, appliances, and furniture.

Things to Do
If you’re looking for a balance between city and rural life, Warragul might be for you. Melbourne is about an hour away, but so are beautiful hikes and bush walks in Baw Baw National Park. There are a fair few coffee shops in town centre, including the recently remodelled Frankie’s and Earth Market Café—the
latter of which also offers plenty of gluten free, vegetarian, and vegan options. Other local coffee shops
deliver to the hospital in the morning, though there is always free instant coffee and tea in the Monash
building and in the hospital cafeteria. There is a plethora of wineries to choose from in the area, and if
you’re looking for something a bit more upbeat, there are plenty of clubs, restaurants, and bars in
Warragul’s city centre to keep you entertained on the weekends. Some of these offer trivia nights,
comedy events, and live music throughout the week—a great way to bond and blow off steam with
colleagues. If you’re looking to get involved in sport, there are some local clubs in the area and netball
is always a popular choice among the students. For more ideas, it is always good to chat with the locals.
If you’re looking for a bit more variety, Drouin has additional restaurants just 10-15 minutes away, and
you can always head down to Traralgon in about 35-40 minutes.

Written by Hannah Webster
YEAR 4C STUDENT DESCRIPTIONS

Bairnsdale – Year 4C

Curriculum
Year 4C in East Gippsland / Bairnsdale runs ‘longitudinally’, which means that each of the 4 disciplines (GP, Women’s, Children’s, MoM) is taught through the year - different to the rotations in Metro sites. This does mean the first few weeks are a little overwhelming but you soon get on top of things! Tutorials are run on Mondays and Fridays during semester 1, and Fridays only in semester 2. Mostly these are held at Bairnsdale, but occasionally they are in Sale where you have the option of driving down for the day or videoconferencing in. These days mostly consist of group tutorials and lectures on each of the disciplines, and sometimes a workshop in the simulation lab. All of the tutors are really knowledgeable and have so much to teach. Tutorials are really engaging as well, as you don’t really have a chance to slack off. There’s a lot to cover but each and every one of the tutors covers their topics really well.
The administration team at Bairnsdale are also super lovely! They’re very approachable if you have any concerns, and they all do their best to resolve any problems you might encounter during the year. They take care of you well!

Disciplines
Women’s Health is made up of weeks on the birthing suite and days in gynaecology. On the birth suite, there are opportunities to do baby checks, follow women through labour and the process of birth (and watch and assist!) and also go to antenatal clinic in the Bairnsdale CBD.
Gynaecology is run both in Bairnsdale and Sale, and both consist of surgical and clinic days.
Paediatrics is taught in lectures and in Sale, where you are provided accommodation for the week. You spend the week on the paediatric ward, where you can follow the resident and take a history / examine patients; perform baby checks; attend C-sections; or go to consultant clinic.
Medicine of the Mind consists of placements at Community Mental Health in Bairnsdale, and a week on the Flynn ward in Traralgon (again, accommodation is provided). Most of the time, you are attached to a case manager (if on CMH) or the doctor (on Flynn ward).
GP makes up the bulk of the year. There are 3 main bases for GP clinics – Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance, and Orbost. A lot of the GPs in each practice run ‘wave’ or ‘parallel’ consulting - where you are given your own room and see the patients first, then present to the GP to discuss investigation and management. It’s a great opportunity to learn, and all of the GPs are really nice, and happy to get you involved!

Accommodation
Everyone in 2018 opted for the university-provided accommodation. There are 3 share-houses, based on your GP clinic. This year, 3 students stayed at Bairnsdale, 3 at Lakes Entrance, and 2 at Orbost.
The house this year at Bairnsdale was within 3 minutes’ walk of Bairnsdale hospital. It has 6 bedrooms,
with single beds. There is also another house at Bairnsdale (with 4 rooms with double beds), a bit further out.
The Lakes Entrance house also has 4 rooms with double beds, whereas the house at Orbost has 4 rooms with 2 double and 2 single beds.
Every house has 2 bathrooms, and there’s plenty of parking available. Rent was a very reasonable $105/week, including utilities. Cutlery and cooking equipment are all provided for you.
Students at Lakes Entrance or Orbost do need to drive back to Bairnsdale for tutorial days, but there is accommodation there as well if you are in Bairnsdale for the week (eg on birth suite).

**Things to do**
There’s a lot to see and do in the East Gippsland area! In terms of food, there are plenty of pubs in the area (Wy Yung Pub, Paynesville for parmas, Metung pub) and a few nice spots in town. Mr D’s is a nice spot for lunch, and Jarrod’s Bakery sells pies for $2 after 4pm – but you have to be quick.

There are also lots of social and competitive sports teams depending on what you’re interested in! If you poke around, there’s a lot of different sports on offer for you to join. They’re a great way to meet new people!
There’s also a 24 hour gym in Bairnsdale, but if you’re not that committed then there are also recreation centres (with swimming pool and gym) in both Bairnsdale and Lakes Entrance that are part of the same network, and they offer corporate discounts for some GP practices if you show that you’re with the practice (your ID card).

There’s plenty of nature to see as well, with beaches and nature walks in the summer. Lots of hiking and camping places are scattered all around, and it’s really a lovely part of Victoria. If you’re into skiing as well, Mt Hotham is only a 2-hour drive away.
On weekends there are farmers’ markets and the Buchan caves to explore, and also a movie theatre.

*Written by Simon Yii*
BENDIGO - YEAR 4C

Curriculum
Bendigo hosts all Year 4C students in the north-west for an orientation week at the start of Semester 1, and another 1-day session at the start of Semester 2.
The Year 4C program itself in Bendigo consists of three rotations; Children's Health, Medicine of the Mind (MoM), and Women's Health. Each of these rotations lasts for 5-6 weeks, and you will be allocated into groups of 4-5 and will rotate across the specialties in those groups. Each rotation is scheduled to ensure each student gets adequate exposure to all the different areas and disciplines within that rotation. The program is led by Dennis O'Connor and Pauline Blake, but the rest of the MRH staff are also easily accessible!
Whilst on Children’s Health and MoM, Fridays are spent at an allocated GP practice (situated at various GP clinics from Marong to Echuca), which is an excellent opportunity to see patients on your own and do some procedures!
The timetable provided by Monash includes both inpatient and community placements. There is also facilitated learning in student-run clinics, consultant clinics, teaching meetings, radiology tutorials, bedside tutorials, theatre time, and attendance to private and community clinics.
There are no ‘lectures’ as such in Bendigo, but every evening there are a series of tutorials delivered by registrars and consultants which are compulsory and are run every evening from Mon-Thurs 4-7pm. This year, we covered MoM on Mondays, GP on Tuesdays, Children’s Health on Wednesdays and Women’s Health on Thursdays. This ongoing teaching of all disciplines helps to keep all the different rotations fresh in your mind regardless of your current rotation.

Accommodation
Year 4C students stay in Monash accommodation consisting of several student houses in Bendigo. You will be living with 3 other people, so if you would like to request accommodation with a friend, email Helen Martin in January. These houses are furnished and are within a 15-20-minute walk to the hospital.
In each bedroom, there is a bed, desk and chair provided, but all bedding and storage supplies need to be brought with you. The kitchen consists of all basic cooking supplies including a kettle, toaster, an electric frypan, pots and pans and crockery. It is recommended that you buy additional cutlery with your housemates, as they often go missing. Unless you want to bring some baking trays and cake/muffin tin, there isn’t really anything extra you need to bring kitchen wise. A small portable heater/blankets would not be amiss, depending on how toasty you prefer your room.

Things to do
Bendigo has heaps of activities and attractions, including local football and netball clubs, cafes, restaurants, art galleries, shopping centres and gardens! There are markets every second weekend, and this year there has been a beer festival, a food truck festival and of course, Groovin’ the Moo! There are also a range of cultural organisations (such as the Bendigo Symphony Orchestra), Bendigo Theatre Company, and sporting clubs (including hockey, netball and soccer). Bendigo’s size means that it can
support more eclectic interests as well, including swing dancing, archery and yachting.

The local favourite coffee shop is Old Green Bean, with other noteworthy mentions to Percy & Percy and Brewhouse Café & Coffee Roasters. There are plenty of restaurant options along Pall Mall for a nice evening meal too. Most importantly, the best HSP in town is at Lady Sultan.

In terms of mental health support, there is a support officer at MRH - Helen Martin. Over and above that, there are many well-qualified GPs in town who are well-experienced in helping medical students with their mental health challenges, and access to private psychiatrists/psychologists is possible. Public psychiatrists/psychologists do unfortunately have a very long wait period; however, many GPs will try to find alternatives for help. If you mention you are a medical student, many private GPs in Bendigo will also bulk bill.

Written by Rav Gaddam, reviewed by Lachlan Elliott
**Goldfields – Year 4C**

**Curriculum**
Generally a three-day week, a GP semester in Goldfields includes 2 days of placement with 1 day of lectures/tutorials - called a “hub day”. The lectures focus on GP, women's and MOM content, with some emergency medicine teaching as well. On the other two days of the week you can occasionally have community placements, including rehab and maternal child health.

Placement days: With all the clinics in the Goldfields region you can really choose what you want experience in. There are opportunities to be involved in obstetrics, anaesthetics, acute medical (hospital care), surgery and urgent care, alongside General Practice. At a minimum you have two days of placement, but the supervisors are more than happy to have you in/call you in for specific things as well as extra days. It’s very much up to you how much or little you do!

Maryborough is known to be very practical with a lot of emphasis on hands-on learning. Many of these opportunities exist in Castlemaine and Kyneton as well.

Logbook: Very easy to sign off, just ask a supervisor! Antenatal clinics occur in Maryborough weekly, with Castlemaine having antenatal visits scheduled with the GP Obstetricians.

Contacts: Jen, the hub coordinator is your go-to for any issues or questions: just email her.

**Locations and accommodation:**
The Goldfields “hub” has three towns this year:

**Maryborough:**
Location: 170km – 2 to 2.5 hours from Melbourne
Housing: 3 bedroom furnished townhouse with double beds. 1 bathroom, 2-car garage.
Walking distance to town. There’s heating in every room, but the A/C is only in the lounge/kitchen. Tends to get very cold in autumn/winter!

**Castlemaine:**
Location: 130km - 1.5 hours from Melbourne
Housing: 4 bedroom furnished house on hospital grounds. Single beds with a shared bathroom and toilet. Walking distance to botanical gardens and The Mill (cafes, brewery, shops).

**Kyneton:**
Location: 90km - 1 hour from Melbourne
Housing: 6 bedroom fully furnished house near the hospital. Each room has its own ensuite with a communal kitchen and living area.
There is public transport to and from all these areas to Melbourne.
Things to do:
The Loddon-Mallee district has a lot of things to do and visit on your off days and weekends. Places like Macedon, Daylesford, Bendigo and Ballarat are no more than an hour away (depending on your specific location). The town of Castlemaine itself is full of cafes, shops and markets - try Das Kaffeehaus. One thing to note about Castlemaine is that there is only one supermarket - IGA, which can be expensive. Although quieter, Maryborough has Coles, Woolies, Aldi and IGA and a few brunch spots (try Daily Dose). Only 15 minutes from Maryborough, Talbot market (held every third Sunday) is a must do, especially for dog lovers! One of the doctors in Maryborough has you over every few weeks for dinner too! Kyneton has a few great cafes and shops as well as being close to places like Mt. Macedon and Hanging Rock.
There’s plenty of community activities to try in every site - sports and theatre in Castlemaine; sporting clubs in Maryborough and Kyneton.

Written by Seema Deb
**Highlands – Year 4C**

**Curriculum**
Year 4C students in the North-West region can spend their semester long GP placement within one of three rural hubs; the Highlands hub involves the regional towns of the Macedon Ranges including Kyneton, Woodend, Gisborne and New Gisborne.

Each semester approximately 7 - 8 students are allocated to this region and are distributed in GP clinics within the towns of Woodend, Gisborne and New Gisborne. These include:
- Brooke Street Medical Clinic (Woodend) - 3 students
- Gisborne Medical Centre (Gisborne) - 3 students
- Ranges Medical Centre (New Gisborne) - 1 student

All students, despite the location of their practice share a very similar weekly timetable. This encompasses two full days of GP, one day of community placements involving local services within the Macedon Shire and a centralised teaching day located at the Woodend Hub on Wednesdays. Here, this day often involves student run PBL teaching sessions including topics from a wide array of disciplines including medicine of the mind, women’s health, men’s health, paediatrics whilst also focusing upon the GP curriculum.

**Accommodation**
Students in the Highlands region are separated into two houses depending on the site of their GP clinic. The house in Kyneton accommodates six students, whilst the Gisborne house accommodates three.

Of the two houses, Gisborne has the more modern feel, with one master room including an ensuite, with a shared bathroom for the remaining two rooms. This house has a huge communal dining and living space perfect for group study.

The Kyneton house has been built for students, with each of the six bedrooms containing a double bed and small ensuite bathroom. Located just behind the Kyneton District Hospital, it makes community placements all the more easy to access. This house, this year, was shared with students in the Goldfields hub practising at the Kyneton clinic. Despite the large number of students placed within this house, parking is not a concern with plenty of space on the property itself.

Placement within this location requires a car for ease of access. Students in the Brooke Street clinic will drive 15 minutes from Kyneton. Often, community placements also occur in neighbouring towns, thus, requiring direct access to some mode of transportation.

**Things to do**
We all anticipate 4C to be a stressful year; there’s a lot of new curriculum and there’s old curriculum to revise. None the less, there is still so much to do in the area.

$150 poorer, I can safely say that there is a wide array of cafes to infuse you with your caffeine dose. Kyneton - it may not be the Brunswick of Melbourne, but its country, community vibe is still strong.
Woodend – the perfect fusion where metropolitan Melbourne meets the country scene
Gisborne – meet the town that strives to maintain the brunching vibes of inner Melbourne. Situated the closest to Melbourne of all three towns, Gisborne seems to maintain

If you’re like me and you want to find any way to save, there a few cafes that reduce your coffee price by fifty cents, just by bringing in a reusable keep cups Saving fifty cents on each coffee does accumulate to some considerable savings, so if you want to dabble in this area here are a few cafes that support the student saver.

Duck, Goose and Larder (Kyneton)
The Hamster Café (Kyneton)
Payasane (Woodend)
The Village larder (Woodend)

Other than coffee, there are some beautiful country gems to explore on your days off. These include Hanging Rock, Trentham and Turpin Falls and Sanitorium Lake. If you’re looking for a shorter stroll, these can be found in the local botanical gardens. A highlight of country placement is the ability to support local business through weekly farmers markets. There’s always a market on each weekend within the Macedon Shire - you might have to drive 15-20 minutes but it’s always worth it.

Written by Shalini Ponnampalam
Faced by many with trepidation, Mildura is actually a wonderful place to do your year 4 hospital placement. It is six hours from Melbourne, in the middle of the desert, with nothing to do on the weekends to distract you from studying for that pesky VIA!

**Curriculum**

*Women's health*

O+G in Mildura is a stellar rotation. Whilst it can seem daunting trying to get the logbook done in only 6 weeks, the team is always extremely accommodating and it’s very achievable provided you are proactive about it. You will spend the majority of your time in antenatal and gynaecology clinics, theatre, and birth suite. Theatre is pretty sweet because often you’ll be the first assistant for caesareans and occasionally bigger operative laparoscopies and occasionally laparotomies. Due to the relatively small number of vaginal births, you may have to go above and beyond to get your births signed off (especially the guys!) However, the midwives are all absolutely lovely and most do their best to get you into watch births, and due to scheduling you’ll rarely be competing with midwife students as per in metro. Teaching is mostly done by Dr Nicole Edge and Dr Nikhil Patravali, who are both incredible doctors and lovely people. All in all, a pretty sweet time.

*Medicine of the Mind*

The more relaxed of the rotations, with plenty of time to head off and do some extra study/work on your assignments. The rotation generally involves time on the inpatient psychiatric ward, spending days with a variety of different psychiatrists and their outpatients, as well as a couple of days with the quirky but lovely Dr Doug Schneider. The famous Dr Pham gives fantastic tutes on Wednesday afternoons, enthusiastically provides feedback on your written assignment, and can teach a huge amount in a short period of time when you are lucky enough to be assigned to him on the wards.

*Paediatrics*

Paeds has traditionally been the downfall of Mildura - largely due to the small number of patients on the ward at any one time. However, the very experienced Professor Geoff Solarsh has introduced an incredible simulation program on around half the Fridays of the semester. This is a full day of teaching, simulation and exam style questions, which covers almost all of the paediatric examinable content. During the week most of your time will be spent on the wards, in the special care nursery and in clinics.

Generally, tutes are run from 12.30-5/6pm Monday, 4-6pm Tuesday and Wednesday, and Fridays alternate between 9-12.30 women’s health case based teaching, and a full day of paediatrics from 8-4. In Mildura you are also not subject to the one-day a week of GP placement as in Bendigo, which is a welcome break. The admin staff are very helpful and happy to alter timetables to suit logbook needs.

**Accommodation**

4C students are mostly placed in 4 person houses around a 5 minute drive from the hospital and about
10 minutes from the town centre. Parking is no issue though, literally across the street from the hospital. The houses are spacious and new, in good condition, and stocked to the gills with all the cooking implements, cutlery, and other necessities you could ask for. They also have excellent air conditioning for the hot summer months and heating for the cold winter nights.

**Things to do**
Despite the negative introduction, Mildura is actually a bustling urban metropolis that has restaurants and coffee to rival Fitzroy, nightclubs on par with Rats, frequent farmers markets filled with fresh produce, and a dazzling array of day trips. Many locations offer discounts to Monash med students, so take advantage of this!!!!

Some highlights include:
Coffee - Nash lane, Blk Mlk, Kaffenio
Brunch - The Wooden Door
Dinner - Thairiffic, Ms Lucy, the pizza café, Stefano’s, Brass Monkey, the Cider Tree
Day trips - Trentham Winery, Perry Sandhills, Kings Billabong, Pink Salt Lakes (Murray-Sunset National Park)
Other misc - lock 11, apex park (lovely beach)
Nightlife - Trivia at the Black Stump Pub on Wednesday nights is always a laugh, and Saturday night can reliably end up at Dom’s or Heaven when it gets late enough.

*Written by Michael Tanner, reviewed by Tia Solomon*
Murray – Year 4C

Swan Hill is located 4 hours from Melbourne, with a population of 10,000 people which boasts one of the most comprehensive teaching programs in the North Western Region with plenty of practical experience seeing patients in the Swan Hill Primary Health Medical Centre and ED, as well as having placements on midwifery. The community is very welcoming to medical students, and the staff, nurses and doctors at the clinic are incredibly warm and passionate about teaching. The town itself is well serviced with a regular V-line service, Aldi, Coles, Woolworths and Target.

Curriculum
Hub day: occurs once a week, with tutorials from allied health services and GPs at the clinic who present on their areas of interest including paediatrics, obstetrics and gynaecology. It is an integrated programme, covering both GP and speciality topics, setting you in good stead for end of year exams. Dr Hession is the academic lead and is very supportive of students and their learning.

Students spend 3 days wave consulting (students see patients independently for 30 minutes then the supervising GP comes in at the end to check management plan), with half a day allocated to community placement/study time and the other half to nurse’s station where students learn procedural skills (dressings, excisions, injections).

Students also spend 2 weeks on midwifery (most students managed to get all their births here), and 2 weeks on ED (fantastic opportunity to revise 3rd year conditions and practice some procedural skills). In addition, there are a variety of visiting specialists that students can sit in with (OB/GYNs, vascular surgeons).

Accommodation
There are 2 houses, Coronation Ave (1.5km away from the clinic), and McCrae St (1-minute walk from the clinic). Both are 4-bedroom houses with well supplied kitchens. Coronation Ave is further away, and is an older house, however it has double beds, and has good heating. McCrae St is very close to the clinic and middle of town, however can get quite cold during the winter, so bring lots of blankets and spare heaters. It is a newly renovated home with 4 bedrooms, of which 3 are large, and one is rather small – all have king single beds.

Things to Do
Swan Hill is right on the Murray River (notably unsafe to swim in), with a beautiful riverside park, great for exercising in or just going for walks. Lake Boga nearby is great for stargazing, water sports, or for a picnic with a view.

There are lots of opportunities for community involvement with students being involved with umpiring netball as well as opportunities to join football/netball clubs (Anne, the med student co-ordinator is a keen recruiter). There are a few gyms in Swan Hill with Voyage offering discounts if you show your hospital ID card, as well as $5 sessions at the Swan Hill Boxing Club.
There are several events throughout the year including monthly farmers and rotary markets, the food and wine festival, race days, Harmony Day and some concerts/shows at the Town Hall.

There are many spots for a feed including Spoons or 202 for coffee, brunch at Boos or High Thyme, and a favourite with poor uni students - cheap BYO Vietnamese at Hamy Pho. Java Spice and Niko Niko are notable for Indonesian and Japanese food respectively however are more expensive.

Nightlife is quiet, however there is one nightclub (Barrels), and the Swan Hill Club often has live music on Fridays.

Written by Kathleen Chow, reviewed by Natalie Guiney
**SALE – YEAR 4C**

**Curriculum**
The curriculum in Sale is run as a longitudinal programme, this means that instead of doing blocks of rotations, you do no more than one week at a time on any specialty. There are 4 GP clinics attached to Sale, 2 of which are in Sale and the other 2 in the nearby towns of Heyfield and Maffra. Generally, you will spend on average 2 days a week in GP. All 4 of the GP practices operate a wave consulting programme, whereby each student is allocated their own patients. You will then run the full consultation with the patient and develop a diagnosis and management plan. The supervising GP will then attend at the end to make your management plan come to life (and make sure you haven’t missed anything). While this is very daunting at first, it doesn’t take long to settle in!

The paediatric rotation consists of 4 weeks on the ward at Sale, an on call with the consultant weekend and community maternity and child health as well as the opportunity to see paediatric patients in GP.

Women’s health at Sale is made up of 4 weeks on the women’s ward and birthing suite as well as time in O&G clinics. The psychiatric rotation is made up of community based mental health as well as 2 weeks on the Flynn ward in Traralgon (fuel for these weeks is reimbursed!).

Most of the teaching is undertaken at Sale, with some Children’s Health days (roughly once a month) in Bairnsdale. Teaching is undertaken in person with teleconferencing used very occasionally.

**Accommodation**
There is fully equipped Monash houses available in Sale, Heyfield and Maffra. The houses are allocated based on GP locations, with each house no more than 5 minutes from the practice. Heyfield is approximately 30 minutes from Sale and Maffra is approximately 20 minutes, students in these locations must travel to Sale for other placements and classes and a fuel bursary is provided depending on how much travel you must do.

**Things to do**
Sale is a small town that shouldn’t be underestimated! There is plenty of things to see and do and a surprising number of options for brunch! The local Guthridge lake is the perfect spot for a stroll and park run happens there every Saturday if you fancy breaking a sweat. Seaspray and 90 mile beach is half an hour from Sale and is the perfect spot for some fresh sea air.

In terms of places to eat and drink, Hunting Ground is a MUST for your morning coffee. Red Catt, Mr. Raymond and Portside are go-to for Saturday morning brunch. Milk and Honey will provide for all of your fresh juice and smoothie cravings. O’Neil’s and the Criterion are a must do for dinner while you are in Sale. If you are in Heyfield, don’t go past the Heyfield Bakery, their vanilla slice is second-to-none and on Thursday and Fridays they do roast rolls that will make you feel right at home! If you are up for a bit of a drive, the food at the Tinamba pub will make the half hour drive very worth your while.
The Sale library has recently been renovated and it is fresh and bright, perfect for when you need to escape the confinements of the hospital.

There is plenty of things to keep you entertained while in Sale, no matter what the day. Thursday nights at the Star hotel will provide for all of your trivia needs, don’t underestimate the competition, it is fierce! And don’t be surprised if you see some of the local medical professionals there battling it out! Friday nights at the Criterion hotel do not disappoint, happy hour is 5-6pm. They usually also have live bands on a Friday and Saturday night, which make up for the recent closure of the only remaining Sale nightclub, Ringerz.

Written by Jackie Dalrymple, reviewed by Imogen Brown
**SOUTH GIPPSLAND — YEAR 4C**

Students are based at one of three sites: Leongatha, Wonthaggi and Foster. This year there were 10 students (4 in Wonthaggi, 4 in Leongatha and 2 in Foster).

**Curriculum**

South Gippsland runs an integrated program, and tutorials for all four specialties are held throughout the year. Most of your time is spent in GP clinic, however there are also a number of intensive rotations in both semesters. You will be allocated 2 weeks of psychiatry on Flynn ward in Traralgon, 4 weeks of paediatrics in Warragul and 2 weeks of women’s health also in Warragul.

In an average week you will have:
- Consulting Days in GP: generally conducting the patient consult yourself followed with a review by your supervising GP.
- Study Days: study in clinic, follow doctors/nurses, go to the local hospital, etc.
- Tutorial Days: held most Tuesday afternoons and all day Wednesdays. They are usually held in in Leongatha and occasionally Foster.
- Other: community mental health, paediatric / gynaecology clinics and surgery.

Students based in Leongatha swap GP clinics mid-year (one clinic in Leongatha, one in Korumburra). Students in Wonthaggi also swap GP clinics mid-year (both in Wonthaggi). Students in Foster spend the whole year at the one clinic.

**Accommodation**

All accommodation is fully furnished with single/double beds and is close to the GP clinics and local hospital. The Leongatha accommodation consists of a 2-bedroom unit and 3-bedroom house (shared with a 5D student). Wonthaggi accommodation is a 4-bedroom house. Foster accommodation is a 2-bedroom unit. Short stay accommodation is provided for your intensive rotations in Warragul and Traralgon.

**Things to Do**

The best thing about South Gippsland is how close you are to some amazing beaches. All the towns have plenty of local sports and community clubs to get involved in. Both Leongatha and Wonthaggi have cheap gym membership for medical students.

Leongatha: A 1.5hr drive from Melbourne. You are only a short drive to Inverloch (great beaches and cafes). The Rusty Windmill is a great brunch spot in town, and Forage & Grind has 10/10 aesthetic vibes.

Wonthaggi: A 1.5hr drive from Melbourne. It is the largest of the three towns and has the most stores. It is super close to Cape Paterson (best for swimming) and Inverloch. The best coffee in town is Beand, but The Coffee Collective has 11/10 hotcakes. Wolf on Murray looks like a small prison from the outside but
Foster: A 2hr drive from Melbourne. It is a half hour drive from Wilson’s Prom (great for hiking, views and beaches). It is also close to the local beaches of Sandy Point and Waratah bay (great for swimming). In town, both Bromley’s on Main and Skyes are great for coffee.

Written by Monique Bihari
Traralgon – Year 4C

Traralgon is the place to be for year 4C! With a small, tight-knit medical community and a large hospital set in the middle of the picturesque countryside, get ready for an amazing year!

Curriculum
The big four rotations (Paediatrics, Psychiatry Obstetrics/gynaecology and GP) are split into 3 cycles of 12 weeks where you get 6 weeks in one hospital rotation (called the ‘intensive’) and a 6 week cycle into GP, which means a total of 6 months in GP. This however, is an amazing thing as rural general practice is very hands on and you treat your own patients and assist with procedures, and sometimes even do them yourself with the GP as an observer. I have personally assisted in plastering broken arms, removing ingrown toenails, suturing a laceration on someone’s face and assess and manage 5-6 patients per day on my own at my clinic.

Usually in your intensive rotation you are the only, or one of two medical students on the wards. This means that the team gets to know you very well, your capabilities and what they feel comfortable letting you do, which in many cases is a lot more than a metropolitan hospital.

Furthermore, the obstetric/gynaecology program here allows for one on one time in clinics with a consultant and many of them are happy for you to examine each patient that comes through (with their consent of course!). All 4 rotations are backed up with excellent teaching and small class sizes where doctors can give you individualised instruction. Sometimes the classes take place in Warragul, allowing you to experience different hospital cultures and a variety of teaching.

A typical day in intensive varies with the rotation you are doing. In paediatrics this would involve ward rounds where you will write notes and fluid balance charts for neonates in the special care nursery (with the team double checking) and then moving off to the paediatric ward to check up on older children. In obstetrics/gynaecology, this may involve a day at the clinics assessing antenatal health, a day in surgery where you will often find yourself assisting or a day on the wards where you will see a variety of presentations. In psychiatry you will either be out in the community seeing patients or in the Flynn ward where you will see acute presentations, allowing for a broad understanding of psychiatric conditions and the spectrum on which they present.

Accommodation
All students who requested accommodation from Monash managed to secure a place. All utilities are covered by the (very reasonable) weekly rent and come fully furnished. The houses are located in either Traralgon or Morwell and are both only a ten-minute drive to the hospital on each side. Traralgon is very car friendly, with parking everywhere and wide roads with no traffic and although some students do get by without a car, it is worthwhile to have your own.
Things to do
There are a million and one things to do around the Gippsland region. These can range from skiing and snowboarding at Mount Baw Baw to nature hikes at the Tarra nature reserve, annual potato and garlic festivals along with a multitude of coffee and brunch shops and tiny op shops along the way. Living with a great bunch of friends and taking every opportunity to relax and unwind with them really helped me destress throughout the year, from taking opportunities to discover local touristy spots to becoming friends with people in the community who have invited me to visit their houses (one of which had three pet llamas). Even simple things like exploring a new place to eat after a long day with wards and lectures make you realise how big and exciting Gippsland can be. In fact, as Melbourne is only a 2 hour drive away, with V/line trains available, I have had friends come down here to relax away from the city.

Written by Maryam Soomro
Warragul – Year 4C

Warragul is an excellent place to be for 4C. The small number of students will allow you to make the most of hands-on opportunities that arise in both the hospital and the GP setting.

Curriculum
The year is structured by being split into 6 blocks, each 6 weeks long. Three of these 6-week blocks are GP placements at a single GP clinic over the year, which involve 2 full days at this clinic every week. Each of the other 6 week blocks are known as an ‘intensive’ and are allocated to one of three specialities - Obstetrics/Gynaecology, Paediatrics or Medicine of the Mind.

This is what your timetable could like for the year:
Block 1 = Women’s Health Intensive (includes ward and tutorials)
Block 2 = GP placement/Women’s Health tutorials
Block 3 = Paediatrics Intensive (includes ward and tutorials)
Block 4 = GP placement/Paediatrics tutorials
Block 5 = Psychiatry intensive (includes ward and tutorials)
Block 6 = GP placement/Psychiatry tutorials

Using Block 1 and 2 as an example, this structure means that over the first 6 weeks of the year you receive Women’s Health tutorials (approximately 6-8 hours a week) and for the next 6 weeks you receive both Women’s Health and GP tutorials (one 3-hour tutorial a week), whilst attending the GP clinic two days a week.

This means there is actually 12 weeks of teaching for each speciality and 18 weeks of GP teaching, making this a fantastic integrated program with a LOT of staff support. The only disadvantage is that all the Psychiatry tutorials are in Traralgon as well as four of the 6-week intensive psychiatry rotation, however, there is a travel reimbursement to cover these costs.

Accommodation
Accommodation is offered in Warragul, and in Trafalgar (which is about 20 minutes away). All the accommodation is fully furnished, with no need to bring beds, mattresses, desks, chairs, tables, or couches. The accommodation costs $110 a week all included, with reasonably fast internet. You may be living with other 4C students or 3B students, a great opportunity to revise third year content and make new friends!

Things to do
Warragul is very close to a number of wineries and is within driving distance of some of the best skiing in Victoria. There are incredible restaurants in town, especially Warragul Thai, and many excellent cafés to enjoy a coffee. Yarragon, about 10 minutes away is one of the most adorable towns, and must be checked out! There are also a number of gyms and swimming pools to keep you active, as well as local
sport teams that would love for you to join and get involved. Lastly, Mt Baw Baw offers a range of activities including some amazing bushwalking and is a great way to relax after a busy week.

Written by Manini Bhatia