

# SHAPING FUTURE RURAL HEALTH PRACTICE: EMPOWERING RURAL IMMERSION STUDENTS THROUGH TAILORED INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION



UNIVERSITY OF  
NEWCASTLE

DEPARTMENT  
OF RURAL  
HEALTH

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## Background

### Interprofessional education (IPE)

Refers to when students from two or more health professions learn with, from and about each other to improve collaboration, quality of care and delivery of health services which is vital for shaping collaborative workforce-ready allied health graduates.<sup>1</sup>

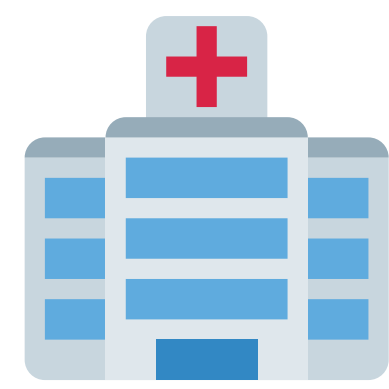
### University of Newcastle Department of Rural Health (UONDRH)

UONDRH provides students of medicine, nursing and allied health the opportunity to complete part of their studies in rural locations within our footprint. This program encourages students to pursue a career in rural practice upon graduation and consequently leads to the improved health and wellbeing of our communities.<sup>2</sup>

### Challenges for Coffs DRH:



Limited peer networks



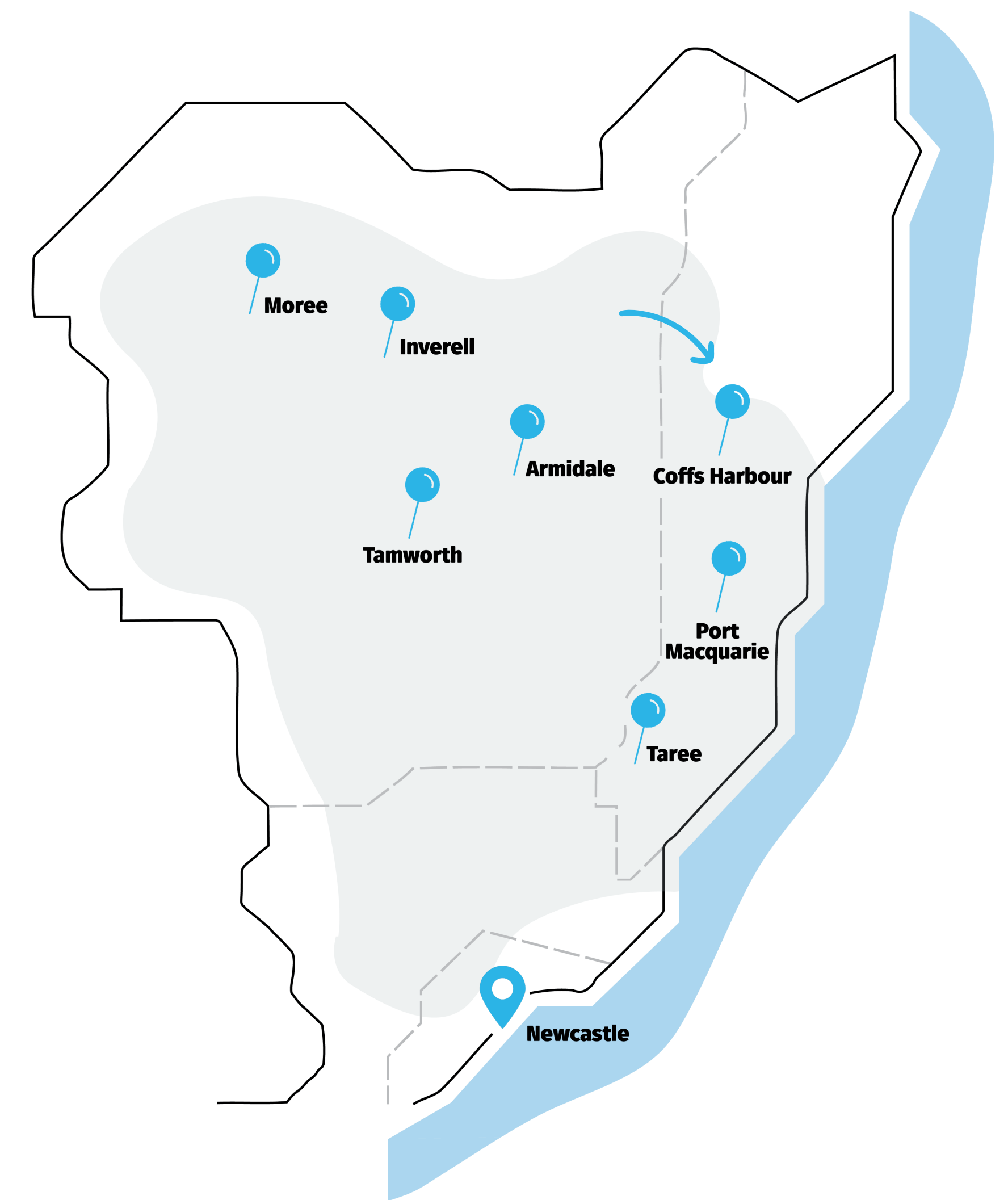
Mix of allied health professions



Translation from classroom to rural healthcare practice



Ensuring principles of interprofessional practice are made explicit



## Aim

To deliver IPE that provided a deeper exploration of interprofessional practice (IP) principles, enhanced professional advocacy and strengthened the translation of learning into rural healthcare practice.

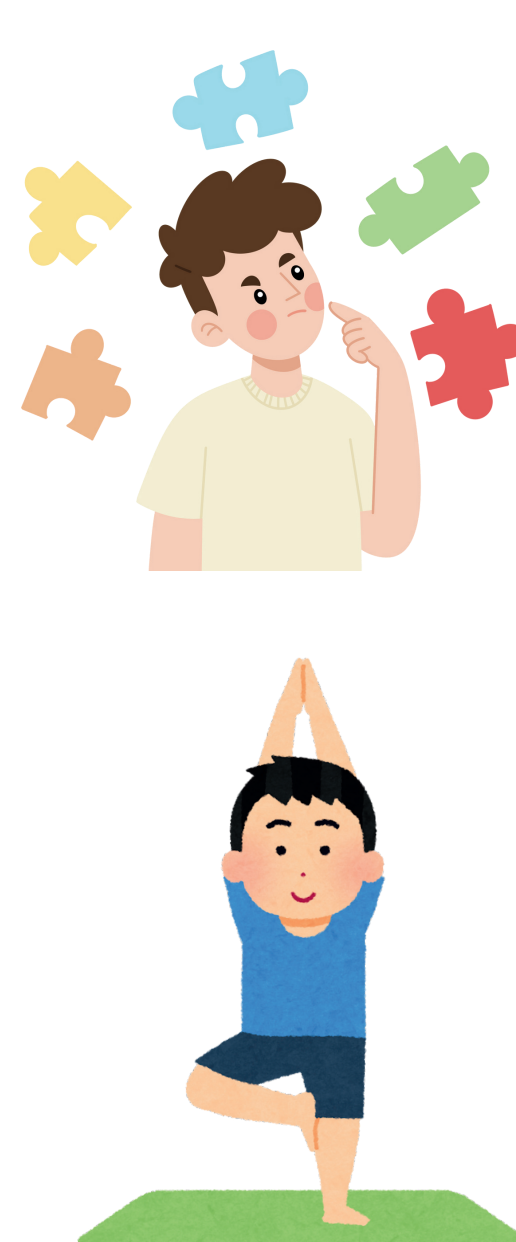


## What did we do?

- ✔ **Collaboration** - Local students, health professionals and IPE experts (professional development workshop) to redesign local IPE events.
- ✔ **Timing** - Events moved from shorter sessions to full-day experiences which allowed for greater emphasis on experiential learning, role modelling, and reflective discussion.
- ✔ **Relevant topics** - Consideration of all local student disciplines to create an engaging experience e.g. Rapport Building Workshop.
- ✔ **Reflective Practice** - Structured staff post-event meetings.
- ✔ **Rural Focus** - Learning was contextualised to rural healthcare settings.

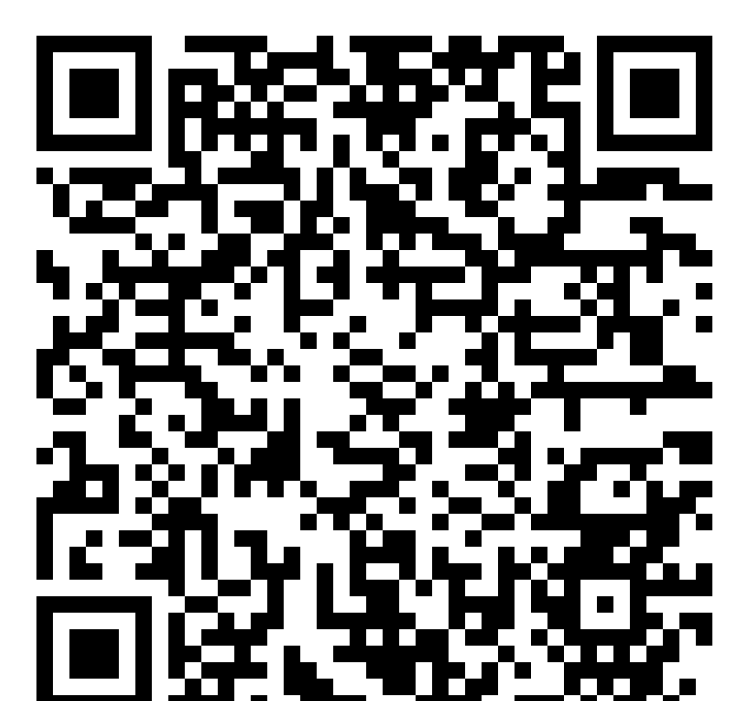
## What did we learn?

- ✔ Importance of time to more deeply explore IP principles and allow for discussion, experiential learning activities and reflection.
- ✔ Finding that the balance between clinical placement experiences and full day IPE opportunities was more appropriate for year-long students.
- ✔ Benefits of understanding how to draw out IP principles for more explicit learning.
- ✔ Providing sufficient opportunities for staff to reflect on the outcomes of IPE events and incorporate student feedback.



## Where to from here?

- ✔ Ongoing staff development in applying IPE principles in rural education settings.
- ✔ Further evaluation of student experiences to explore how this contributes to shaping collaborative workforce-ready allied health graduates.



Scan here to find more information about the [Department of Rural Health](#)

## References

1. Martin, P., Pighills, A., Burge, V., Argus, G., & Sinclair, L. (2021). Promoting Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice in Rural Health Settings: Learnings from a State-Wide Multi-Methods Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(10), 5162.
2. University of Newcastle Department of Rural Health. <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/college/health-medicine-wellbeing/department-of-rural-health/about-us>

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