

## Rural doctors launch fundraising campaign for “game-changing” COVID Medihoods in rural hospitals

With the opening of both state and international borders, protecting against a COVID-19 outbreak continues to be a focus for Australia’s rural and remote doctors.

A fundraising campaign has been launched by the Rural Doctors Foundation today to help protect rural patients, nurses and doctors from cross-infection...and to keep our rural hospitals open.

The campaign aims to achieve this by delivering McMonty Medihoods to as many rural hospitals as possible, with an early focus on Queensland and Victoria.



An all-Australian innovation, the Medihoods have been hailed as a game-changer by doctors and intensive care nurses, and are currently installed in over 50 locations across Australia and internationally.

They are cost-effective, easily installed over hospital beds and, with their specialised air filtering systems, create a cover of protection over each patient, helping to protect the patient and health workers from cross infection.

The Rural Doctors Foundation, with the support of the Rural Doctors Association of Australia, had previously delivered a number of Medihoods to Queensland’s Darling Downs region and to Thursday Island in Queensland during the first COVID outbreak.

“The Medihoods promise to be a game-changer for rural hospitals and their communities in the fight against COVID”, **Rural Doctors Foundation Chair, Dr Dan Halliday, said.**

“Every rural doctor, nurse and hospital staff member who has COVID-19, or is forced to self-isolate due to potential exposure, increases the demand on all other staff exponentially and takes their hospital one step closer to having to shut down for some time.

“By greatly reducing the risk of cross infection, Medihoods help address one of the core challenges that COVID has created within hospitals – system overwhelm.

“In rural hospitals where staffing shortages are common, Medihoods can mean the difference between remaining operational or being forced to close – whether that’s for accidents and emergencies, births, important cancer screenings, or essential surgery.

“And with retrievals often being more difficult for rural COVID patients, it is likely these patients will need to remain at their local hospital for some time before they are taken by air to a larger centre.

“We can’t afford for our rural hospitals to have to close their doors due to a potential COVID exposure, particularly when they provide so many frontline medical services to their local communities.

“And with the summer holidays fast approaching, and more Australians starting to travel again, there is every possibility that, even if you are from the city, you may need to visit a rural hospital while you are taking your summer break.

“We really encourage all Australians to get behind our efforts to install more of these highly effective Medihoods in rural hospitals.”

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**More information** about the Foundation’s McMonty Medihood fundraising campaign, and how to donate, can be found at [www.ruraldoctorsfoundation.org.au](http://www.ruraldoctorsfoundation.org.au). Donations are tax deductible.

**Available for interview:** Dr Dan Halliday, Rural Doctors Foundation Chair

**Media contact:** Fran Avon on 0407 236 341

**Join the Rural Doctors Foundation for a webinar to see how this Aussie innovation is protecting rural and remote communities from COVID-19.** On Wednesday 8 December 2021 (4pm AEDT), we will hold a free webinar to share the remarkable story of the McMonty Medihoods and how they’re helping hospitals protect crucial medical staff and patients against COVID-19. Hear from ICU Nurse Samantha Bates who has been part of the research team testing and improving the life-saving hoods and has seen first-hand their impact. Sam will share her learning and stories from being on the COVID-19 frontline. Register by emailing [info@ruraldoctorsfoundation.org.au](mailto:info@ruraldoctorsfoundation.org.au).

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#### Multimedia:

Download the example social media asset (shown above) that will be used during the campaign [here](#). (Other examples are available on request by contacting Fran Avon).

A high resolution photo of Dr Dan Halliday is available [here](#).

A video demonstrating the McMonty Medihood is available [here](#).

To watch a video of the iterative design process for the hood [click here](#). (please credit Cesar Nicolas, University of Melbourne).

A high resolution photo of the McMonty Medihood in use (with Associate Professor Forbes McGain at left) is available [here](#) (please credit Penny Stephens / Western Health).