

RURAL DOCTORS TO SAVE UP TO \$70,000 AFTER GOVERNMENT DECISION TO REDUCE HECS-HELP DEBTS

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Doctors who live and work in rural and remote parts of Australia could save up to \$70,000, and nurses almost \$20,000, with legislation introduced today by the Albanese Government which will reduce or wipe their HELP debts.

The Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN), Executive Director, Luke Sheehy said the measures will change lives.

“This is a game-changer for some of the most remote parts of the country which are crying out for experts in their field, particularly medicine, and it’s just as crucial for those who have devoted their study and work lives to helping others,” Mr Sheehy said.

ATN’s three medical schools – based at Curtin University, Deakin University and The University of Newcastle - boast more than 1,500 medical students (eight per cent of the sector) and ATN has over 12,000 nursing students (16 per cent of the sector). Doctors working in remote parts of Australia will benefit by up to \$70,000 and a full-fee paying nursing practitioner can expect to save up to \$20,000.

The Federal Government announced that, a nurse or doctor who lives and works in:

- A remote town for a time period of half the length of their course would have their entire HELP debt wiped
- A large, medium or small rural town for a time equal to the whole length of their course would have their entire HELP debt wiped, and,
- An eligible place for a period which is equivalent to half the time required is eligible to half the applicable debt reduction

“Our universities provide world-class preparation to our medical and nursing students and this is the shot in the arm many of them need to decide what their next step will be, and to further their careers,” Mr Sheehy added.

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The Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN) was established in 1999 and brings together Australia’s six real world universities focused on enterprise, impact and finding solutions to issues facing our rapidly changing economy and society. Our member universities are Curtin University, Deakin University, RMIT University, The University of Newcastle, University of South Australia, and University of Technology Sydney. Our universities produce Australia’s most job-ready graduates and undertake world-class research with real-world impact. Through our innovation we are proud disruptors challenging the status quo. ATN universities provide world-class education to almost 310,000 students and teach 20 per cent of domestic higher education students and 19 per cent of international students. We are the fastest-growing university grouping in terms of domestic students. Together, we are proud of who we include, not exclude, with a strong commitment of equity, excellence, and social justice. ATN is one of Australia’s leading university peak bodies with a track record of advocating and shaping positive policy outcomes with all levels of government.

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