A key focus of this year's challenge is 'disruptive innovation'. A previous example was a smart phone that helps optometrists perform eye exams for a very low cost in rural areas. Due to the staggering statistics in New Zealand, the Foundation urges all health professionals to participate in this challenge.

A decision on the venue for the 2018 national rural health conference is expected this year, compared to 2015. (RNZ)

The proposal is for future doctors from rural communities to be selected for four-year scholarships from the pre-registration training programme at the University of Otago. This project has been reviewed and approved by the Otago Polytechnic Research Ethics Committee.

The stories will be collected during the autumn of 2017. The researcher plans to present rural nurses' practice and the stories at a future rural nurses' conference. Would you like to participate in a research project to identify stories of past and present rural nurses' practice?

The rural practice of the year, as voted by the public, went to Ngunguru Medical Centre, Northland (pictured below right).

The pair (pictured above) were presented with the award by last year's recipients Andrea Judd and Bronwyn Bromley (Medical student). The 2017 Peter Snow Memorial Award has gone to Kaikoura GPs Dr Chris Henry and Dr Michael Wills. Five fellowships of the division of rural hospital medicine New Zealand were awarded to 135 across all the health disciplines.

Five of the winners are from the rural GP training programme. Gayle Crone from Auckland, Jo Casserly from Auckland, Nikki Franks from Southland, Rob Powley from Waikato and Joe Taylor from Northland.

The winners of the "What does rural health mean to you?" photo competition were announced at a ceremony at the Waikato Medical Centre, Hamilton, by the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network chief executive Dalton Kelly (pictured). The award was announced at a ceremony at the Royal Tropical Society in Auckland, by the British Royal College of General Practitioners, the Royal College of General Practitioners in New Zealand, and the Royal College of General Practitioners in Australia. The award was announced by the British Royal College of General Practitioners, the Royal College of General Practitioners in New Zealand, and the Royal College of General Practitioners in Australia.

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