

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## **Paramedic Research Bursary offered to advance rural health care workforce**

The 2007 Paramedic Research Bursary has been awarded to Launceston paramedic Glenn Aslin at the Tasmanian Ambulance Service Headquarters in Hobart today.

The bursary is jointly supported by the University Department of Rural Health (UDRH), the Australian College of Ambulance Professionals (Tasmania) (ACAP) and Calvary Health Care Tasmania.

“Glenn Aslin proposes to investigate the actual and potential linkages between rural ambulance services and palliative care services in Tasmania. Glenn has been awarded the bursary because his research proposal is focused on rural services and is timely as the state is developing its clinical and primary health services plans,” said UDRH Director Associate Professor Sue Kilpatrick.

Mr Aslin is now enrolled in the Masters preliminary program through the UDRH and his area of research involves primarily developing an understanding of the issues involved in non trauma end of life decision making and its application in a rural ambulance setting. It is envisaged that the results of this study will extend to non rural paramedics and ambulance volunteers dealing with this client group.

“I am pleased to be selected. It is time for ambulance professionals to examine closely and re-evaluate role models to better meet the changing health needs in rural communities and provide a way of improving rural health outcomes. It is great to see organisations like the UDRH, ACAP, and Calvary coming together in partnership to advance our knowledge and practice in the long neglected area of pre-hospital health research,” said Mr Aslin.

“Palliative care in the rural environment is one area where ambulance paramedics with their flexibility and mobility have the ability to serve a greater role in the acute clinical care of this unique client group. Ambulance paramedics can potentially help ease the burdens on rural health in Australia. The area of holistic palliative care is, I believe, an area where ambulance practice can be improved through the process of education and integration into the existing care plans to provide better outcomes for this client group,” added Mr Aslin.

ACAP (Tasmania) Chair Tim Rider said: “One of ACAP’s key objectives is to promote, support and where possible participate in research of pre-hospital care practices. ACAP, through the partnership with the UDRH and Calvary, has been able to offer this bursary to assist members in accomplishing this important goal. It is with the support of these organisations that the evidence base and future direction of the pre-hospital profession can be enhanced and expanded.”

Calvary Health care is again delighted to be a sponsor of the UDRH-ACAP-Calvary Bursary Award. The award has its origins from a positive spirit of cooperation between private, academic and government organisations. It assists academic endeavours of Tasmanian Ambulance Service officers, in studying and finding solutions to pre-hospital health issues affecting rural communities.

“We congratulate Glenn Aslin on being this year's recipient of the award. We look forward to the results of his study of the interface between the rural paramedic and palliative care patients,” remarked Associate Professor David Smart, Director of Emergency Medicine, Calvary Health Care Tasmania.

The bursary is offered each year to an ambulance officer who is interested in developing skills to conduct research on the delivery of pre-hospital care with relevance to rural and/or remote areas.

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