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SA WELCOMES NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 2013

Adelaide has been selected to host the 2013 National Rural Health Conference, a gathering that is expected to contribute more than \$4.25 million to the state's economy.

Health Minister John Hill said the biennial gathering attracts more than 1,200 delegates from across Australia to discuss developments and issues in rural, regional and remote health care.

"Hosting this important conference in Adelaide is an excellent opportunity to promote our state's priorities in country health," Minister Hill said.

"It will allow SA's regional health workers to build networks and research opportunities, as well as focusing on improving the health and wellbeing of their patients."

The four-day conference will include presentations from leading health professionals and public figures, as well as social functions and an exhibition of more than 50 booths.

The conference sets the agenda in recommending rural health guidelines for the health care sector for the next two years, including the work of the National Rural Health Alliance, the national body that organizes the conference.

The Adelaide conference follows the 2011 meeting in Perth, which set priorities of improving indigenous health opportunities, providing better mental health care to regional centres and addressing the challenges of recruiting medical professionals to those areas.

"We have already made it a priority to bring a better, more integrated health care system to country areas, providing more elective surgery, chemotherapy and renal dialysis closer to where people live," Minister Hill said.

"We are also redeveloping and expanding South Australia's four country general hospitals in Mount Gambier, Berri, Whyalla and Port Lincoln hospitals as well as building new and improved facilities for dental and primary health care elsewhere in country SA."

To attract this event, the Government of South Australia worked with the Adelaide Convention Bureau, which is responsible for the 'Conventions Adelaide' program.

This program employs a strategic state-wide approach to secure major conventions that are aligned to South Australia's priority areas, such as Country Health.