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Title:
Mapping Rural And Remote Health: Problems And Solutions

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Abstract:

Distance is the most important defining feature of rural and remote health services. Geographic information systems are a powerful tool for addressing rural health issues because they make us think spatially and because of their capacity to integrate data sets compiled for different purposes and using distinct boundaries. ... At least that is the theory. We have encountered a number of technical and analytical challenges in the use of GIS for rural and remote health, not the least of which is inadequate capacity to geo-code rural and remote addresses from existing digital maps. This presentation will outline some of the challenges and also review the value of the approach with examples from two current projects: one on diabetes-related morbidity in remote Western Australia and another on social and spatial aspects of the growth of a client base for a new private general practice established in under-serviced regional centre.