

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum – 11 October 2002

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**RURAL AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES – FOCUS OF A RESEARCH NETWORK**

(Extract from "Regional Health Check", August 2002)

Rural and indigenous communities are to be the focus of a research network aiming to develop key interventions to decrease the health-related inequalities through supporting sustainable communities and sustainable development. The network is being established by Sustainable Communities Network based at Edith Cowan University, WA.

There are a number of opportunities to be involved with the research network. For further information or to become involved in network activities please contact the Network Coordinator, Meredith Green at Consortium for Health and Ecology, Edith Cown University T: 08 9400 5677 or email [meredith.green@ecu.edu.au](mailto:meredith.green@ecu.edu.au)

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Interested in becoming a "friend" of the Alliance? Become more involved with the work of the Alliance by becoming a "friend". "friends" support the Alliance by being an integral part of the Alliance's policy and evaluation process. They also receive other benefits. For more information on membership see <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/friends.htm>

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**AGED CARE NURSING SCHOLARSHIPS**

RURAL and regional students wanting to study aged care nursing are being urged to apply for the Commonwealth's Aged Care Nursing Scholarships. 100 scholarships, each worth up to \$10,000 per year, are available for 2003. Application packs are available from the Royal College of Nursing. Further information is available on 1800 11 66 96 or from their website at <http://www.rcna.org.au>. Applications for the Undergraduate Scholarships close on November 8, 2002. The full text of the statement by the Minister for Ageing, Kevin Andrews, is available at <http://www.health.gov.au/mediare1/yr2002/ka/ka02081.htm>

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PARTYline is the official newsletter of the National Rural Health Alliance. Keep up to date with rural health policy information and good news stories on living and working in the rural health community. Available online on <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/partyline.htm> or receive a hard copy by emailing [michele@ruralhealth.org.au](mailto:michele@ruralhealth.org.au)

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"WHEN IT'S RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU

The National Health and Medical Research Council has developed a manual "When it's right in front of you: Assisting health care workers to manage the effects of violence in rural and remote Australia". The manual has been designed to help health care workers and others in rural and remote areas, prepare for and respond to violence in ways that will minimise its impact.

The manual is available at <http://www.nhmrc.publications/synopses/hp16syn.htm>. The full text of the NH&MRC announcement is available at <http://www.health.gov.au/nhmrc/media/2002rel/violence.htm>

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Extracts from ABC Health Updates, 10 October 2002

AUSTRALIA'S NURSING CRISIS - 7.30 Report: 8/10/2002

A recent government report predicts that by 2006, the health system nationwide will be short of 31,000 nurses. Hospitals and health care providers are being urged to develop strategies to retain the nurses they already have, particularly young graduates who can quickly become disillusioned. Full story available at <http://abc.net.au/7.30/s696450.htm>

NEW DIMENSIONS: HEALTH - Outback health - Tuesday 15 October, 6:30pm, ABC TV

With additional training, nurses in remote and regional areas of New South Wales can now become nurse practitioners. This entitles them to prescribe a limited range of drugs and order some tests. Recently appointed nurse practitioner Julie Scott is the first point of call for health care for people in a 50-kilometre radius of Premer and Tambar Springs, west of Tamworth, and has been the driving force behind the establishment of community facilities in both towns. Also on New Dimensions Health this week, the high incidence of drowning in remote Aboriginal communities; the effect of drought on depression and suicide; and bush medicine: Aboriginal Australians' intricate knowledge of the medicinal uses of native plants. [http://abc.net.au/dimensions/dimensions\\_health/](http://abc.net.au/dimensions/dimensions_health/)

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From: Mary Lawson <Mary.Lawson@med.monash.edu.au>  
Subject: Graduate Certificate in Health Professional Education

If you teach either undergraduate or postgraduate students in any medical or health care settings and want to improve your teaching, supervision or course development skills this course is for you. It is practically orientated and will assist you to apply theory and best practice to your educational role. Further information can be obtained from:

cmhse.programmes@med.monash.edu.au  
ph (03) 9905 8163  
fax (03) 9905 8027  
[http://www.med.monash.edu.au/cmhse/Graduate\\_certificate.htm](http://www.med.monash.edu.au/cmhse/Graduate_certificate.htm)

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**BUSH CRISIS LINE - 1800 805 391**

Bush Crisis Line is a twenty-four hour confidential telephone support and debriefing service for multi-disciplinary remote health practitioners and their families. It is staffed by qualified psychologists with remote and cross-cultural experience, is toll free and available from anywhere in Australia. For more information [http://www.crana.org.au/pandp\\_psn.html](http://www.crana.org.au/pandp_psn.html)

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**GOVERNMENT CLAIMS TELSTRA'S UPGRADES "ON TRACK"**

A report by the Australian Communications Authority (ACA) has found that Telstra is "on track" in delivering a range of service upgrades in the remote 'extended zones'. The extended zones cover 80 per cent of Australia's land area and include about 40,000 services.

The report found that Telstra had introduced untimed local calls at a rate of 22 cents in the extended zones and had replaced more than 15 per cent of the total number of services that needed to be upgraded to new technology. The report also found that Telstra had installed 3,899 two-way satellite Internet services. The rollout of these services is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

The full text of the ACA statement is available at <http://www.aca.gov.au/media/2002/02-34.htm> and the full report is available at <http://www.aca.gov.au/consumer/uso/extendedzones/ezprogramupgrade.htm>

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The "Australian Journal of Rural Health" is a refereed journal with a national and international reputation for quality scholarship. Its focus is multi-disciplinary and it includes articles of interest to general practitioners, nurses, allied health professionals, pharmacists, health administrators, universities and rural health units. Reduced rates apply to members of some organisations. For more information see <http://www.blackwell-science.com/ajr>

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ALP TO CONSIDER "TARGETTED" REBATE INCREASES

According to Opposition Health spokesperson Stephen Smith, the Federal Opposition is looking at a targeted increase of the rebate to get bulk-billing rates where they are in very serious decline – outer metropolitan areas and rural and regional areas – to encourage doctors in those areas to bulk bill.

"As well, it's not just a remuneration problem," Mr Smith said. "I acknowledge that there are very legitimate claims to what the doctors are saying so far as their remuneration is concerned. But, it's not just remuneration, it's also a complete lack of national workforce planning so far as doctor shortages are concerned from this Government and that extends not just to doctors but to health and allied health professionals generally, in particular nurses."

The full text of Mr Smith's statement is available at <http://www.alp.org.au/media/1002/20002445.html>

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NEW LINKS ON NRHA WEBSITE

As a result of a clean-up, a number of new links have been added to the NRHA website. These include:

- Centre for Rural Health policy Analysis (US) – <http://www.rupri.org/healthpolicy/index.html>
- Doctors in Rural and Remote Training Association – <http://www.dirrta.org>
- Dyslexia Health Education – <http://www.dyslexia.fa.co.uk>
- Health Canada – Rural Health – <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ruralhealth/>
- HealthConnect – <http://www.health.gov.au/healthonline/connect.htm>
- International Association of Agricultural Medicine and Rural Health – <http://www.iaamrh.org>
- National Centre for Rural Health (NZ) – <http://www.chmeds.ac.nz/departments/ruralhealth/>
- Primary Health Care Research and Information Service – <http://www.phcris.org>
- Resource Center for Rural Behavioural Health – <http://www.apa.org/rural/>
- Rural Doctors Workforce Agency (SA) – <http://www.ruraldoc.com.au/front.htm>
- Rural Health Workforce Agency (NT) – <http://www.ntrhwa.org.au>
- School of Rural Public Health (Texas A&M) – <http://tamushsc.tamu.edu/SRPH/>
- University of Queensland TROHPIQ Rural Health Club – <http://www.trohpiq.org>

Additional links relevant to rural health concerns, or other comments on the website, would be welcome. Send to Jim Groves at [grovesc@winshop.com.au](mailto:grovesc@winshop.com.au)

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SCANNING NEW HEALTH TECHNOLOGIES  
(Extract from ABC News in Science, 2 October 2002)

Using a desktop scanner hooked up to a computer, the mother of a badly burnt boy living in outback Queensland emailed pictures of his injuries to doctors for advice, and so avoided regular trips to town. Full story available at <http://www.abc.net.au/science/news/stories/s690104.htm>

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Health records project at risk  
(Extract from "Australian Financial Review", 1 October 2002)

Australia's most ambitious health information technology project, HealthConnect, is under threat from a privacy stoush that may result in state and federal governments fighting a constitutional battle for control of patients' electronic medical records. The full story is available at <http://afr.com/it/2002/10/01/FFXAQK0AP6D.html>

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7th NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

The 7th National Rural Health Conference is to be held at the Grand Chancellor in Hobart Tasmania from 1 - 4 March 2003. Registration for the Conference will be available in October 2002. This will include online registration for the first time.

The Conference website is at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/seventhconf/seventhconf.htm> and includes information and a booking form on the exhibition.

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CONTRIBUTION AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION AND DISCLAIMER

The NRHA e-forum is edited by a third party moderator, Jim Groves. Contributions are sought on any topic relevant to rural health concerns. Please send contributions to the moderator at [grovesc@winshop.com.au](mailto:grovesc@winshop.com.au).

As such, the Alliance does not control postings and the contents do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Alliance. Nor do postings necessarily reflect the view of Jim Groves or any organisation he is associated with. Jim Groves can be contacted at [grovesc@winshop.com.au](mailto:grovesc@winshop.com.au).

The e-forum is sent to a mailing list of the Alliance and those have indicated interest through the subscription box at the NRHA Web site (<http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>). This issue is going to 1,179 recipients. Please forward a copy to any colleague you think may be interested.

To subscribe, send a message saying "subscribe NRHA eforum" to

grovesc@winshop.com.au. To unsubscribe, send a message saying "unsubscribe NRHA eforum" to grovesc@winshop.com.au. The archive of the newsletter is available at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/newsletter.htm>