

Eforum Newsletter: NRHA eforum 9 April 2004

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum – 9 April 2004

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WANTED: A STRONGER AND CLEARER NATIONAL FOCUS ON ALLIED HEALTH

The Alliance has issued a general challenge to State and Territory Governments to prioritise support through their Area Health Services and public hospitals for allied health positions in rural and remote areas. The full text of the statement is at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au> and is reprinted below.

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8th NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE – YOU'D BE A FOOL NOT TO SUBMIT AN ABSTRACT

"Central to health: sustaining well-being in remote and rural Australia", 10-13 March 2005, Alice Springs, Northern Territory

The Call for Abstracts for the 8th National Rural Health Conference is now open at (go to 'Conferences' and then 'Upcoming'.) The full text of the statement is reprinted below.

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INDIGENOUS DENTAL HEALTH IS CRYING OUT FOR SPECIAL TREATMENT

The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and the National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) have written to Minister Tony Abbott seeking a commitment that the new dental initiative in MedicarePlus will give priority attention to Indigenous patients. The full text of the joint statement is at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au> and <http://www.naccho.org.au/health0604.html> and is reprinted below.

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From: Annette Halliday
Subject: Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) Advanced Provider Course

The Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support Course is a multidisciplinary face to face hands on training course for doctors, nurses, paramedics, health workers, mine rescue squads and any first responder. The PHTLS Course provides the participant with the fundamental awareness that while definitive care cannot be provided for the critically injured trauma patient in the field, the continuum of care begins at the scene with competent pre-hospital trauma management.

The two-day course is lecture and practical skills station based. The course originated in the USA and has been delivered in Queensland since 1997. Courses are now run regularly interstate. PHTLS Australia/Queensland Health will be delivering Advanced Provider Courses at the following interstate locations:

- * Western Australia, Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 July, Host Facility: Armadale Health Service
- * New South Wales, Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 August, Host Facility: Blue Mountains Hospital
- * Northern Territory, Wednesday 8 and Thursday 9 September, Host Facility: St John Ambulance Centre, Alice Springs; Sunday 12 and Monday 13 September, Host Facility: St John Ambulance Centre, Alice Springs.

For further information and registration forms contact PHTLS_Program@health.qld.gov.au

Annette Halliday
Course Administrator
Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support Program
Australian Office - Queensland Health
Yangulla Centre Central Zone Rural Health Training Unit
PO Box 4028, Rockhampton. Qld. 4700

- * Future Health and Health Service Needs
- Rural communities – future populations, services and economies
- Future Service Models in Rural Communities
- Current and future health needs in rural areas
- * Working in Rural Areas
- Attracting health professionals to the rural areas
- Working in rural communities
- * Rural Patient Safety
- Ensuring patient safety in rural health services

For more information contact Diane Giles, ph 02 6766 2288, fax 02 6766 3003, email dgile@doh.health.nsw.gov.au

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The National SARRAH Conference, "Walking together, side by side" - A Conference for Rural and Remote Allied Health Professionals
26 – 28 August 2004, Alice Springs Convention Centre
Information available at <http://www.sarrah.org.au> (under "Conferences")

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SAD KIDS NOT BAD KIDS – AMA URGES A RETHINK ON CRIMINALISING PETROL SNIFFING

AMA President, Dr Bill Glasson, has supported Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health Chair Pat Anderson's call for clear thinking on the serious issue of petrol sniffing. The AMA statement is at <http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-5XSANV>

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Extract from AMWAC/AHWAC "Health Workforce Intelligence", March 2004

Ward AM, Kamien M, Lopez DG, "Medical career choice and practice location: early factors predicting course completion, career choice and practice location, "Medical Education" 38(3):249-258, March 2004.
The overall aim of this study from the Department of General Practice, University of Western Australia, Claremont, Western Australia, was to identify the factors that best predict medical career choice and rural or metropolitan practice location. A total of 229 medical students who commenced their studies at the University of Western Australia in 1984 and 1989 participated in the study. Data relating to sociodemographic backgrounds, admission scores, and personality characteristics were collected from the students in the first year of their medical studies. Information about career choice and practice location was obtained four years after graduation (response rate: 94%). It was found that having a rural background - defined as ever having lived in a country (rural) area – was the most important predictor of both rural general and specialist practice. Of the 68 participants who were practising as GPs four years after graduation, 13 (19.1%) were practising in rural areas and 12 of the 13 (92.3%) had a rural background. For all medical career choices it was found that participants with a rural background were 2.46 times more likely to be in rural practice. The researchers conclude that their study confirms the relevance of a rural background for students who become rural practitioners, both for GPs and specialists.

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PARTYline Issue No.17 - OUT NOW. 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> or receive a hard copy by emailing michele@ruralhealth.org.au

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RECORD NUMBERS STUDYING MEDICINE

An extra 234 medical students have begun studies at Australian universities under the MedicarePlus Bonded Medical Places Scheme. All of the bonded medical school places funded through MedicarePlus have been filled, making this year the largest intake of medicals schools students in Australia's history. The statement by Health Minister Tony Abbott is at <http://www.health.gov.au/mediarel/yr2004/ta/abb037.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 and rural 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_bcl.html

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From: Tanya.Boston@health.gov.au
Subject: Update of Department's Website

The Department's website has been updated to include information about the overseas trained doctors international recruitment initiative. The information may be accessed at <http://www.health.gov.au/medicareplus>.

The Australian Government has already contracted three medical recruitment agencies to provide services under the international recruitment strategy. Contact details for each of these agencies are listed on the website. Please note that the site will be updated regularly, over the next month or so, as additional medical recruiting agencies are contracted.

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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>

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GROWING THE CAPITAL OF RURAL AUSTRALIA – THE TASK OF CAPACITY BUILDING
(Extract from RIRDC On-Line, March 2004)

New report from the Rural Industries R&D Corporation, "Growing the Capital of Rural Australia - The Task of Capacity Building" is available at <http://www.rirdc.gov.au/reports/HCC/04-034sum.html> (summary) and <http://www.rirdc.gov.au/reports/HCC/04-034.pdf> (full report).

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FUNDING BOOST FOR RURAL AND REGIONAL TV SERVICES

More than 2,927 Australian households will get new access to television services under the latest instalment of the Australian Government's Television Black Spots Program. The \$35 million Television Black Spots Program forms part of the \$120 million Television Fund established with proceeds from the sale of the second tranche of Telstra. The statement by the Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Daryl Williams, is at http://www.darylwilliams.dcita.gov.au/Article/0,,0_7-2_4011-4_118155,00.html

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INDIGENOUS EDUCATION STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The Howard Government will provide \$641.6 million over 2005-2008 under the Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme (IESIP). Over \$513 million will be provided to continue supplementary recurrent assistance for Indigenous students, and \$128.1 million for on-going and new strategic projects to further accelerate the educational outcomes of Indigenous Australians. Supplementary Recurrent Assistance Supplementary funding will continue to be paid for Indigenous students in government and non-government education providers across the preschool, school and vocational education and training sectors in remote, provincial/rural and metropolitan areas. Education Minister Brendan Nelson's statement is at <http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Nelson/2004/04/nind4050404.asp>

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Extracts from ABC Health-Updates
(Health-Updates is a weekly alert about recent ABC health coverage now available online. Information on how to subscribe can be found at <http://www.abc.net.au/health/maillinglist.htm>)

INDIGENOUS HEALTH STANDARDS FALLING (The World Today: 30/03/2004)
<http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2004/s1077152.htm>

Medical student wins Connellan award for outback service
A fifth year medical student has won this year's E.J. Connellan award, for service to people who live in the outback. Brad Murphy from Mt Isa has set up an online first aid course, called the 'ARRESTOR' project. <http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/stories/s1077914.htm>

AMA UNHAPPY WITH FED GOV BONDED STUDENTS SCHEME (AM: 06/04/2004)
<http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2004/s1082065.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. APRIL 2004 ISSUE NOW AVAILABLE. For more information see <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/journals/ajr/>

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BETTER TELEPHONE ACCESS FOR REMOTE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Indigenous Australians living in remote communities will get better access to telephone services with the launch of two new initiatives. The Australian Government's Community Phones Subsidy Scheme and Community Phones Demonstration Program will target very small communities without public phone facilities. The statement by the Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Daryl Williams, is at http://www.darylwilliams.dcita.gov.au/Article/0,,0_7-2_4011-4_118123,00.html

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LABOR'S POLICY FOR OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

Labor has announced proposals to establish a new framework for Indigenous self-governance and program delivery with a focus on regional partnerships and a new directly elected national representative body. Further information is at <http://www.alp.org.au/media/0304/20007157.html>

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NETWORK RELIABILITY FRAMEWORK TO BE REMOVED

The Australian Communications Authority is calling for interested parties to comment on the effectiveness of the Network Reliability Framework (NRF) following its first year of operation. In particular, the ACA was looking for feedback on the measures being used under the NRF to identify poorly performing parts of the Telstra network and the public reporting of Telstra's performance under the NRF. Information available at http://www.aca.gov.au/aca_home/media_releases/media_enquiries/2004/04-23.htm

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CITY RESIDENTS THREE TIMES MORE LIKELY TO COMPLAIN ABOUT TELEPHONE/INTERNET SERVICES

Statistics released today by the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman show that fewer than 1 person in every 1000 people living in the

