Eforum Newsletter: NRHA eforum 7 May 2004

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum – 7 May 2004

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8th NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

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

The Conference website is at http://www.nrha.net.au/nrhapublic/publicdocs/conferences/8thNRHC/home.htm

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From: Mick Blair
Subject: North Qld Mental Health Nurses 6th Tropical Symposium

The Tropical Symposium 2004 (incorporating the Consultation Liaison Mental Health Nurses Forum) is to be held on the 4th 5th and 6th June at the Radisson at the Pier in Cairns.

The Symposium run over three days has now 32 abstracts accepted and will consist of two streams to choose from each day. A jam packed event with registration kept to a cost of $220.00 by the sponsors who will be part of the trade display.

A Function Dinner will be organised for the night of Saturday 5th June. Cost will be included in the registration for delegates. Additional guests will be welcome at a cost of $50 each.

Arrival drinks will be arranged on Thursday. Dinner & drinks on Friday night will be at own arrangement but we will nominate a preferred venue.

Contact Kim Foster at James Cook University School of Nursing Cairns for further details 07-40421548 or email Tom_Ryan@health.qld.gov.au

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From: Don Perlgut (ceo) [mailto:ceo@rhef.com.au]
Subject: RHEF satellite broadcast on "Infectious Diseases: Management and Control" - 18 May 2004

Infectious diseases can have a devastating effect on both the health and well being of the community. These diseases are diverse in nature and all pose a potential threat to public health. This program will look at the management and control of infectious diseases, including practical advice for health professionals living and working in rural hospitals and local practices. Reference will be made to the Australian Government's revised Infection Control Guidelines. The program will also:
- Outline the prevalence and impact of infectious diseases in the Australian community
- Discuss issues surrounding emerging diseases and present the latest epidemiology
- Highlight the principles of management in the control of infectious diseases in rural health centres, nursing homes and hostels including pneumonia/influenza, chlamydia & herpes simplex
- Discuss lessons learnt from SARS and how rural hospitals and practices can prepare for future outbreaks of infectious diseases.

Panel of Speakers
- Introducton by the Hon. Tony Abbott MHR, Minister for Health and Ageing
- Chair: Dr Norman Swan, Presenter of the Health Report on ABC Radio National
- Professor Aileen Plant, Centre for International Health, Curtin University, Perth
- Dr Mike Whitby, Director Infection Management Services (Southern Queensland) Princess Alexandra Hospital, Brisbane
- Emeritus Professor Peter McDonald: Chair, Health Reform South Australia & Chair of the review of the Infection Control Guidelines, Adelaide
- Dr Sue Page, Director of Education, Northern Rivers University Department of Rural Health, Lismore NSW & President, Rural Doctors Association of Australia

Broadcast details
Tuesday 18 May 2004 at:
- 8pm Sydney/Melbourne/Brisbane/Canberra/Hobart time
- 7.30pm in Adelaide/Darwin
- 6pm in Perth, repeated at 8pm in WA
Also repeated on Friday 21 May 2004 at 12.30pm Sydney time (12noon SA/NT, 10.30am WA)

For further information, go to http://www.rhef.com.au/programs/403/403.html or contact the Foundation on tel (02) 6232-5480 or via email rhef@rhef.com.au

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NATIONAL HEALTH WORKFORCE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The Australian Health Ministers' Conference released Australia's first national health workforce strategic framework. The Framework sets the direction for the Australian health workforce and is a set of guiding principles for the government and all workforce stakeholders to apply to the development of health workforce policy. The Health Ministers' communiqué is available at http://www.health.gov.au/mediarel/yr2004/jointcom/jc004.htm

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LIFELINE'S JUST ASK - 1 300 13 11 14

Your Rural Mental Health Information Service
Lifeline's Just ask is a rural mental health information service. Information provided includes: referral to services and web sites, printed material and a range of self help resources. The self-help resources focus on practical steps to help promote mental health in a range of areas. For information and copies of resources call or visit http://www.justask.org.au

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FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DECISION ON ABORIGINAL HEALTH CHECK WELCOMED

The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation welcomed the news that the Federal Government was about to introduce a preventative health check for Aboriginal Australians between the age of 15 and 54 years of age. The Government's statement announcing this initiative is at http://www.health.gov.au/mediarel/yr2004/ta/abb052.htm

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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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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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DON'T LEAVE CHANGE UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE - HOW AGED CARE CAN SURVIVE IN THE BUSH

Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) has released a report on Rural and Remote Viability in aged care. It comes at a time when Government advisors have questioned how aged care facilities with fewer than 40 beds can survive under the present funding arrangements. 83 per cent of aged care homes in outer regional and remote Australia have less than 40 beds. Information on ACSA's rural and remote working group is at http://agedcare.org.au/projects/rural/

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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: Don Perlgut (ceo) [mailto:ceo@rhef.com.au]
Subject: "Managing Mental Health Issues for Young People" RHEF National Satellite Broadcast - 25 May 2004

Adolescent health care in Australia provides specific challenges for general practitioners. The transition from child to adult is characterised by developmental and behavioural issues that can lead to risk-taking behaviour, feelings of isolation, breakdowns and/or difficulties with parental relationships and communication. This program will cover practical clinical skills for GPs to enable them to work effectively with young patients who are experiencing emotional or mental health problems, and includes a dramatised case study.

Speakers:
Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, Consultant Adolescent Psychologist, Albert Road Centre for Health, South Melbourne
Dr Lena Sanci, General Practitioner and academic specialising in adolescent health, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne
Professor Ian Hickie, Executive Director, Brain & Mind Research Institute & Dept of Psychiatry, University of Sydney
Dr Jenny Beange, Rural GP & CEO of Dubbo Plains Division of General Practice, Dubbo NSW
Dr Rob Walters, General Practitioner in Sandy Bay, Tasmania & Chair of the Australian Divisions of General Practice
Chaired by Dr Norman Swan, Presenter of the Health Report on ABC Radio National.

Broadcast details:
Tuesday 25 May 2004 at:
- 8pm Sydney/Melbourne/Brisbane/Canberra/Hobart time
- 7.30pm in Adelaide/Darwin
- 6pm in Perth, repeated at 8pm in WA
Also repeated on Friday 28 May 2004 at 12.30pm Sydney time (12noon SA/NT, 10.30am WA)

For further information go to http://www.rhef.com.au/programs/406/406.html or contact the Foundation on tel (02) 6232-5480 or via email rhef@rhef.com.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

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INCREASED FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR GPs TO BULK BILL

Doctors in regional areas now receive a $7.50 incentive payment for bulk billing concession card holders and children under 16. Over four years, the $7.50 regional bulkbilling incentive will cost an additional $131.2 million. Every bulk billed GP service provided from 1 May 2004 to concession card holders and children in regional, rural and remote areas, and throughout Tasmania will attract an additional $7.50 rebate. GPs remain free to bulk bill anyone they choose, regardless of age or concessional status, but this measure makes it more attractive for GPs to bulk bill. Health Minister Tony Abbott's statement is available at http://www.health.gov.au/mediarel/yr2004/ta/abb049.htm

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Extracts from ABC Health-Updates
(Subscribe at http://www.abc.net.au/health/mailinglist.htm)

Bad Water in Broken Hill (The World Today: 22/04/2004)
http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2004/s1092936.htm

Medical students reject rural placement scheme
Medical students want the Federal Government to abolish a scheme offering extra medical school places to students who agree to practice in rural areas after they graduate. http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/stories/s1095635.htm

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INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS CARRYING HEAVIEST BURDEN OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Cardiovascular disease still ranks as Australia's biggest killer and largest health problem, affecting 3.67 million people a year, with Indigenous Australians carrying by far the greatest burden of illness and death from this disease group.

These facts are included in Heart, stroke and vascular diseases: Australian facts 2004 – the latest edition of Australia's most significant report series into the impact of cardiovascular disease – jointly released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the National Heart Foundation of Australia.

Report co-author, Sushma Mathur, of the AIHW's Cardiovascular Disease, Diabetes and Risk Factor Monitoring Unit said Indigenous Australians were more likely to be hospitalised and, depending on their age, up to 10 times more likely to die from cardiovascular disease than the rest of the population. In 2001, one in five had long-term cardiovascular conditions.

'Potential contributing factors such as smoking, high blood pressure, obesity, harmful alcohol consumption, poor nutrition, and diabetes are all more prevalent among Indigenous Australians,' Ms Mathur said.

The full text of the AIHW statement is at http://www.aihw.gov.au/media/2004/mr040505.html and the report is available at http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm?type=detail&id=10005

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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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From: Ruth Murton
Subject: Palliative Care Knowledge Network

Professor David Currow is leading a group looking at the usefulness, feasibility and costs associated with developing a Knowledge Network for palliative care in Australia. We are currently investigating what possible form such a network could take and whether it would be of value to the palliative care community and the general public.

The Project Group is keen to make people aware of the project and to get their input and feedback. Email contact is Jennifer.Tieman@rgh.sa.gov.au. Updates will be posted on the Knowledge Network page that can be found on the CareSearch website at http://www.caresearch.com.au.

Jennifer Tieman
Project Manager

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IT TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR VERY REMOTE COMMUNITIES

Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Daryl Williams has announced that very remote communities across Australia will have better access to basic computer training and technical support under an $8.8 million program. The Australian

Government's IT Training and Technical Support Program aims to make basic information, computer technology (ICT) training and technical support more accessible for people and organisations located in very remote areas of Australia. Information on the program is available at http://www.dcita.gov.au/Article/0,,0_1-2_3-4_118588,00.html

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TWO HEALTHCONNECT TRIALS FOR QUEENSLAND

The Commonwealth Government has provided $2.9 million for HealthConnect trial projects in Brisbane and North Queensland, marking another step forward in the development of a national system of electronic health records. The statement by Health Minister Tony Abbott is at http://www.health.gov.au/mediarel/yr2004/ta/abb047.htm

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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 or use the eforum contribution box at the NRHA website, http://www.ruralhealth.org.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.

This issue is going to 2,062email addresses. Please forward a copy to any colleague you think may be interested.

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