



- 7.30pm in Adelaide/Darwin  
- 6pm in Perth, repeated at 8pm in WA  
Also repeated on Friday 2 July 2004 at 12.30pm Sydney time (12noon SA/NT, 10.30am WA)

For further information go to <http://www.rhef.com.au/programs/404/404.html>. To RSVP please contact the Foundation on tel (02) 6232-5480 or via email [rhef@rhef.com.au](mailto:rhef@rhef.com.au)

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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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#### ALLIED HEALTH WORKERS TO HELP THE CHRONICALLY ILL THROUGH MEDICARE

The Commonwealth Government has announced that a mechanism for implementing the new Medicare allied health initiative from 1 July 2004 has been finalised following consultations with GP and allied health professional groups. The new initiative will allow chronically ill people who are being managed by their GP under an Enhanced Primary Care plan (EPC) access to Medicare rebates for allied health services. The new allied health measure will allow people on an Enhanced Primary Care plan to get Medicare rebates for up to five allied health consultations a year – up to a maximum rebate of \$220 a year. Allied health professionals covered are Aboriginal health workers, audiologists, chiropodists, chiropractors, dieticians, mental health workers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, osteopaths, podiatrists, psychologists and speech pathologists. The full text of the statement by Health Minister Tony Abbott is at <http://www.health.gov.au/mediarel/yr2004/ta/abb074.htm>

The AMA welcomed the initiative, although it called for some clarification of details. The AMA statement is at <http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-5ZR9W6>

However, the Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP) warned that the implementation of the allied health initiative is doomed to fail. The ADGP claimed it, will not deliver better health care for the chronically ill, and will mean that many GPs will refuse to participate in the initiative. The ADGP statement is at [http://www.adgp.com.au/client\\_images/13284.pdf](http://www.adgp.com.au/client_images/13284.pdf)

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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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#### SMALL TOWN'S WEIGHT LOSS TO INSPIRE OTHER RURAL COMMUNITIES

The weight loss efforts of the small mid-western NSW town of Wellington will be used to inspire rural communities across Australia to tackle the problem of obesity. Funded under the Government's Rural Chronic Disease Initiative, the Wellington community came up with a creative way of tackling the problem of obesity, diabetes and heart disease on a mass scale. The full text of the statement by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, Ms Worth, is at <http://www.health.gov.au/mediarel/yr2004/tw/wor022.htm>

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Annual Conference of the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses, 1st-3rd of September 2004, at Coffs Harbour - BreakFree Aanuka Beach Resort. Information at <http://www.indiginet.com.au/catsin/>

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PARTYline Issue No.18 - 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](mailto:michele@ruralhealth.org.au)

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Australian Association of Social Workers Rural Social Work Action Group - In Association with National Rural and Remote Special Interest Group - 8th Biennial Conference : From The Desert To The Deep Blue Sea: The challenges and diversity of rural and remote social work practice. 14-15 July 2005, Mercure Hotel, Geelong. Call for Abstracts at <http://www.aasw.asn.au/news/conferences/aasw.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.bushcrisisline.org.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>

