

# Eforum Newsletter: NRHA eforum 24 September 2004

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum – 24 September 2004

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## WANTED: EQUAL HEALTH FOR RURAL PEOPLE BY 2020

In the context of recent welcome announcements from the Coalition and the ALP on public hospitals and rural general practice, the Alliance is calling for a strong commitment from both major Parties to work across the board to raise the health status of people in rural and remote areas to that of their urban counterparts by 2020. The full text of the NRHA statement is at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au> and is reprinted below.

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## RURAL AGED CARE NEEDS URGENT ATTENTION

Political parties must urgently address the vital needs of aged care in rural, regional and remote Australia, Aged & Community Services Australia (ACSA) and the National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) have said. The full text of the statement is at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au> and is reprinted below.

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## NRHA POSITION PAPER

The latest NRHA position paper 'Supporting Health Service Managers in Rural and Remote Australia' makes ten recommendations aimed at having health service managers recognised as an important professional group within the multidisciplinary team. The paper is available at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/nrhapublic/Index.cfm?Category=PositionPapers>

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## 8th NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

Registration is now open for the 8th National Rural Health Conference, to be held at Alice Springs, 10-13 March 2005. The draft program and registration are available on-line through the Alliance's website at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>

There has been strong interest in the event, with 440 abstracts offered for the 80 spots on the program. Keynote speakers will include Ms Pat Anderson, CEO of AMSANT; ATSIC Commissioner Alison Anderson; Alan Pettigrew, CEO of the NHMRC; and Judge David Sheppard of the New Zealand Environment Court.

The Conference will be a major opportunity to hear reports on research and on service developments for health in rural and remote Australia. There will be time on the program for networking and yarning. Some of the 80 contributed papers will be presented informally to encourage feedback, and a number of first-time presenters will again be on the program.

There will be a trade display and arts-in-health performances and exhibits. People attending the Conference will be able to visit local health care sites and agencies. There are at least seven pre-Conference events being held, mostly on Thursday 10 March. Details of these are also on the Conference website.

Early Bird Registration for this major national event over three and a half days costs \$682 (\$660 for friends of the Alliance). The Early Bird price is available until 17 December 2004.

Further information: phone 02 6285 4660 or email [conference@ruralhealth.org.au](mailto:conference@ruralhealth.org.au). The Conference website is at <http://www.nrha.net.au/nrhapublic/publicdocs/conferences/8thNRHC/home.htm>

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## RURAL HEALTH IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Labor's hospitals policy includes \$43.75 million for specialist care in regional, rural and remote Australia. This includes \$17.5 million more for the Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program, \$17.5 million more for Isolated and Interstate Patients Transport and Accommodation Services, and double the funds currently provided for specialist training in rural areas. Labor also proposes to provide \$3.5 million for more scholarships to support medical students from rural and remote areas and reduce the length of bonded service required by the acceptance of a bonded medical school place. The policy statement is available at <http://www.alp.org.au/policy/health/hospitals.php>



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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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ARTICLE IN "RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH"

'Effect of rurality on patients' satisfaction with out of hours care provided by a family doctor cooperative'

This paper from Ireland attempts to evaluate patient satisfaction with general practice out of hours cooperatives in a rural district. It also investigates the impact of rurality on patient satisfaction. Health planners, rural practitioners and researchers from other European countries could learn reading this interesting study. <http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=320>

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EXTRACT FROM ABC HEALTH UPDATES

(Subscribe at <http://www.abc.net.au/health/maillinglist.htm>)

THE PULSE: CANCER IN THE BUSH

If you get cancer, pray you live in a city and not in the outback. That's because where you live affects your chances of survival - and being in the city beats the country by a country mile. Find out more in The Pulse - our new regular online column. <http://www.abc.net.au/health/thepulse/s1205336.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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AN ENCOURAGING TREND? ARE AUSTRALIAN GPs GETTING BETTER AT IDENTIFYING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PATIENTS?

New research findings suggest that Australian general practitioners may becoming better at identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people during patient consultations, a key factor in the delivery of high priority general practice services. Details are in a statement by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) at <http://www.racgp.org.au/document.asp?id=14528>

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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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PARTYline Issue No.19 - 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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NEW ONLINE ACTIVITIES BOOST GP MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION

gplearning, the online learning website of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), has boosted its mental health content. The RACGP statement is at <http://www.racgp.org.au/document.asp?id=14614>

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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).

This issue is going to 2,075 email addresses. Please forward a copy to any colleague you think may be interested.

To subscribe or unsubscribe, or to view previous newsletters, go to "eforum" at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>

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Wanted: Equal health for rural people by 2020



The proposals are in a joint Discussion Paper from ACSA and the NRHA available on the ACSA website at <http://www.agedcare.org.au> and the NRHA website at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>. Comments on the Discussion Paper are called for by 30 September.