Eforum Newsletter: NRHA eforum 6 May 2005

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum – 6 May 2005

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8th NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

The full set of Conference recommendations, organised and edited
for format, and with the appropriate caveats as to their status and the Alliance's approach to them, is on the Alliance's website at http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/nrhapublic/publicdocs/conferences/8thNRHC/home.htm. It is about 190 in all: a useful snapshot of ideas, approaches, models, criticisms etc.

The Conference Communique and Key Recommendations are available at
http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/nrhapublic/publicdocs/conferences/8thnrhc/Communique.pdf

Available papers from the 8th Conference have been put on the ABC Website. See
http://abc.net.au/rural/events/ruralhealth/2005/papers.htm. The full proceedings from the Conference will be available in June.

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The Australian Journal of Rural Health invites you to contribute to the ongoing development of rural health in Australia, and submit your manuscripts for publication. Send your papers to AJRH@newcastle.edu.au and be pleasantly surprised at how quickly you can be in print. Author guidelines and sample issues of the AJRH are available at http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/submit.asp?ref=1038-5282 or email ajrh@newcastle.edu.au for further information. The April 2005 issue of the journal is available online now at http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/links/toc/ajr

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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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AUSTRALIA'S CHILDREN HEALTHY AND WELL - BUT NOT FOR ALL

Australia's children are on the whole very healthy, with families and the community playing an important role in their overall wellbeing, says an Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report launched .

The report, "A Picture of Australia's Children", covers a holistic range of measures of health and wellbeing, including information on elements of family structure, education and early learning, socioeconomic status, social cohesion, health status and infant mortality. AIHW report author Dr Indrani Pieris-Caldwell says that a combination of medical and social factors has contributed to the halving of the infant mortality rate over the last two decades, from 9.6 per 1,000 live births in 1983 to 4.8 per 1,000 in 2003. Similar improvements have occurred for children aged 1-14 years.

'The major contributing factors have been the declining rate of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) (84% decline between 1983 and 2003), and death rates from injury and poisoning (60% decline). Family and community-based structures and support have certainly played an important role in this, alongside medically-based interventions and advice.'

Dr Pieris-Caldwell said that while significant health and child development gains are a feature of the report, there are areas of concern for the future. 'Infants from the least advantaged socioeconomic areas are twice as likely to die before the age of 1 year as those from the other end of the socioeconomic spectrum. And although the Indigenous infant mortality rate has declined over time, it is still 2.5 times that of other Australian children.'

The full text of the AIHW statement is at http://www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2005/mr20050502.cfm and the full publication is at http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10127

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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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NEW ARTICLES IN RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH

'Planning and implementing the first stage of an oral health program for the Pika Wiya Health Service Incorporated Aboriginal Community in Port Augusta, South Australia'
The oral health of the Indigenous community in South Australia's mid-north has been a concern for some years. This project report describes the setting up of a culturally sensitive, quality dental service within an already operating the Aboriginal Health Service.
http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=254

'A database to record, track and report health student rural placements'
Do you need to track and report on student placements in your rural region? See what you think of this web-based solution from South Australia.
http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=334

'The positive impact of rural medical schools on rural intern choices'
This Letter "The positive impact of rural medical schools on rural intern choices"
offers interesting evidence from South Africa.
http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=417

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PARTYline 8th Conference Edition 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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SUPPORT FOR RURAL PHARMACIES MADE EASIER

The Minister for Health and Ageing, Tony Abbott, has said that pharmacists in rural and
remote areas will find it easier to obtain government support payments as a result of new
simplified rules. The revised business rules apply to the Rural Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance, which is claimed by about 750 pharmacies and will total $12.4 million in 2004-05. The full text of Mr Abbott's statement is at
http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/health-mediarel-yr2005-ta-abb037.htm

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RURAL PHARMACY PROGRAM NEEDS TO BE STRENGTHENED

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia says an innovative program which supports rural and remote
pharmacies and indigenous communities needs to be strengthened under the Fourth Agreement currently under negotiation. The Chair of the Guild's Rural and Regional Committee, Neil Anderson, said the Rural and Remote Pharmacy Workforce Development Program (RRPWDP), had been highly successful in maintaining essential pharmacy services to people in "the bush". The program provides important support including an emergency locum service, rural and remote pharmacy infrastructure grants, an undergraduate scholarship scheme to encourage young pharmacists to practice in non-metropolitan areas, and an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Undergraduate Scholarship scheme", Mr Anderson said.
The full text of the Guild statement is at http://www.guild.org.au/public/currentissues/media_rural_270405.pdf

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PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION RELEASES REVIEW OF NATIONAL COMPETITION POLICY REFORMS

The Productivity Commission review of National Competition Policy Reforms can be viewed at http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiry/ncp/index.html

Have your say! If you wish to provide comments on these publications, please go to:
http://www.pc.gov.au/publications/feedbackform.html

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REMOTE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY ONLINE PROJECTS GET FUNDING
(Extract from The 2005 Update: AuNz Net and Information Industry Briefs, 24th April 2005

Projects from the Northern Territory, Queensland, Western Australia, New South Wales and South Australia have won bids for funding from the Indigenous Communities Online Program
(ICOP).

What the projects have in common is that they aim to improve access for indigenous Australians to suitable online information and services. Most of the projects are websites, website content, or added fubnctionality on websites. They include: a regional website for the Ngaanyatjarra Council and communities; a community website to showcase and market Wiradjuri artists; and a website to act as a community justice intervention strategy by providing learning materials targeted at Indigenous youth at risk of re-offending.

Some details of the individual projects are available at
http://www.minister.dcita.gov.au/media/media_releases/new_online_access_projects_for_remote_indigenous_communities

DISCUSSING THE WAY FORWARD FOR INDIGENOUS TELECOMMUNICATIONS

A forum bringing together many of the government and consumer players in indigenous telecommunications will take place in Alice Springs on 17-18 May 2005. The Forum will cover issues relevant to government, industry, community organisations and academia. It is hoped it will provide an update on the current state of remote indigenous communications, including details of government policy objectives and programs. Further information is at http://www.telinfo.gov.au/Indigenous_Forum.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.

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 2,092 email addresses. Please forward a copy to any colleague you think may be interested.