Eforum Newsletter: NRHA eforum 20 May 2005

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum – 20 May 2005

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2005-06 FEDERAL BUDGET

Details on the Government's health budget are at http://www.health.gov.au/internet/budget/publishing.nsf/Content/2005-2006-1 and http://www.budget.gov.au/2005-06/ministerial/html/dotars-11.htm

The Rural Doctors Association was critical of the absence of any major commitments to rural health. The RDAA statement is at http://www.rdaa.com.au/default.cfm?action=docviewer&DocID=233

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POORER HEALTH, HIGHER RISK OUTSIDE MAJOR CITIES

Australians living outside major cities have shorter life expectancy, higher death rates, and are more likely to have a disability compared to city dwellers, according to a report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

This is so even when taking into account the effects of the known poorer health of Indigenous Australians, who make up a greater proportion of the population in regional and remote areas than they do in the cities, and affect health figures in remote and very remote areas in particular.

People outside major cities were also more likely to place themselves at a higher risk of poor health - for example, they were more likely to smoke, be overweight and drink alcohol excessively.

"Rural, regional and remote health: Indicators of health" focuses on health status, determinants of health, and health service provision, and is the first systematic comparison of its kind.

Other findings in the report include:
* Hospital admission rates for coronary artery bypass graft and coronary angioplasty were lower outside major cities, despite similar rates of self-reported coronary heart disease.
* Birth rates, particularly for teenagers, were higher in rural and remote areas.
* Immunisation rates were slightly lower outside major cities.
* Children outside major cities had, on average, more decayed, missing or filled teeth. This was partly explained by much lower incidence of fluoridation of the water supply in rural areas.
* Pertussis (whooping cough) notification rates were up to twice as high outside major cities.

The AIHW statement is at http://www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2005/mr20050513.cfm and the report is available at http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10123

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From: Karen Roberts
Subject: Bridging the Gaps : 2nd Biennial Rural Mental Health Conference 2005, 13th - 15th July 2005, Deakin University, Warrnambool campus

This conference aims to build on the success of the first Rural Mental Health Conference held in 2003 and continue to address issues faced by mental health services in rural areas by bringing together an interstate audience with national and international speakers. The conference will focus on gaps in service delivery in rural areas and is aimed at rural mental health workers and practitioners, GP's, participants, carers, the local indigenous community and key community stakeholders involved in the partnership of rehabilitation and health promotion.
Further details and Conference Flyer and Registration form can be viewed at http://www.aspire.org.au/conference or please contact Karen on kroberts@aspire.org.au

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From: Ruth DANIELS <RDANI@DOH.HEALTH.NSW.GOV.AU
Subject: 2nd NSW Rural Allied Health Conference

"ALLIED HEALTH WORKING TOGETHER", Friday 28 and Saturday 29 October 2005
Novotel Brighton Beach, Brighton-Le-Sands, Sydney

NSW Health recognises that allied health services are a critical part of the NSW Health Workforce. The 2nd NSW Rural Allied Health Conference will be held on 28-29 October 2005 will provide an opportunity for allied health professionals, health service managers, educational institutions and others to come share valuable experiences and raise issues facing allied health practitioners and the services

they deliver in rural and remote NSW. Conference themes are: Workforce, Allied Health Working Together, Rural Clinical Practice and Practical Skills for Allied Health Professionals.

Registration is NOW OPEN. You can register on line, or download the registration form, from the Conference Coordinators website: http://www.hotelnetwork.com.au/conferences/conferences#nswruralhealth2.

For further information please email alliedhealth@doh.health.nsw.gov.au.

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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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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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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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AMA INDIGENOUS HEALTH REPORT CARD FOCUSES ON LOW BIRTH WEIGHT BABIES

The AMA has released "Lifting the Weight", the AMA's fourth report card on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. AMA President Dr Glasson said the AMA has collated important data on low birth weight and premature babies to give our political leaders and the public a snap shot of this huge public health problem – a problem that can be fixed with proper funding, resources, education and political will.

Indigenous babies are more than twice as likely to be born premature or underweight as non Indigenous babies, putting 1,140 children a year at a physical and developmental disadvantage.

The report is available at http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-6CJ6ZK

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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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EXTRACT FROM ABC HEALTH UPDATES
Subscribe at http://www.abc.net.au/health/mailinglist.htm

DROUGHT IMPACTS ON MENTAL HEALTH OF FARMING COMMUNITY (The World Today: 17/05/2005)
http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2005/s1370506.htm

PEOPLE DYING YOUNGER IN RURAL AREAS: STUDY (The World Today: 13/05/2005)
http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2005/s1368078.htm

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NEW ARTICLES IN RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH

'Video outreach journal club'
Would you like to be part of a Journal Club but there is no-one close enough to join in? This article gives encouragement for how technology can assist in overcoming such barriers.
http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=355

'Enhancing patient-based learning: introducing STRAC and the reflective history template'
Are you involved in rural health education? Do you worry whether your students are covering the whole curriculum? This article presents an interesting way to track and stimulate student learning in a rural location.
http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=368

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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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QLD SUPPORTS NURSE PRACTITIONERS

Queensland Premier Peter Beattie has advocated nurse practitioners as one of the solutions to the problems of the State's health system.

"The use of nurse practitioners in many health systems overseas has proved to be a positive advance, particularly in dealing with chronic disease management. There are projections that 80 per cent of the health budget will one day be swallowed up by the needs of elder Queenslanders. Doctors won't have the time to provide the treatment that elderly people suffering from conditions such as diabetes and asthma will need on a regular basis." Mr Beattie said.

Mr Beattie's statement is available at http://statements.cabinet.qld.gov.au/cgi-bin/display-statement.pl?id=6742&db=media

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RESEARCH PROJECTS FOCUS ON THE HEALTH OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

Research projects in Western Australia and New South Wales targeting the health of Indigenous children will receive $6.5 million from the Australian Government. Announcing the funding, the Minister for Health and Ageing, Tony Abbott, said the four projects would be funded through the Healthy Start To Life initiative introduced last year and managed by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Details are in Mr Abbott's statement at http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/health-mediarel-yr2005-ta-abb057.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 2,093 email addresses. Please forward a copy to any colleague you think may be interested.