Eforum Newsletter: NRHA eforum 29 July 2005

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum – 29 July 2005

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LET'S MAKE MORE OF ADVANCED NURSING PRACTICE - NEW REPORT

Expert nurses, with advanced nursing practice, can make a major contribution to improved health outcomes for people living in rural and remote areas. Issues affecting expert nurses - including nurse practitioners - need to be more widely understood. In particular, State, Territory and the Australian governments need to check the way legislation and regulation currently impact on advanced nursing practice.

Full text of the Alliance statement is at http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/nrhapublic/Index.cfm?Category=LatestNews and is reprinted below. The Alliance's Paper on advanced nursing practice is now available at http://www.ruralhealth.org.au or in hard copy.

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From: Gordon Gregory <NRHA@RURALHEALTH.ORG.AU.
Subject: Australian Health Care Reform Alliance

A meeting of the Australian Health Care Reform Alliance (AHCRA) has agreed to continue its promotion of strong consultation with the Australian people on what they – the public – expect from their health care system. Following successful consultations of this kind in Canada and the UK, the AHCRA would like to see such an exercise in Australia that is large enough, representative enough and independent enough to be accepted as an integral part of the health are reform currently unfolding in Australia.

The meeting in Sydney on 26 July was chaired by John Dwyer and attended by representatives of many of the AHCRA’s 30-plus member bodies. The AHCRA is a keen observer of the current health care activity of the Council of Australian Governments and the Productivity Commission, and the interaction with it of health care providers and consumers, as well as of the mainstream health departments. The AHCRA believes that close consultation with the Australian public and ongoing engagement with the health sector will enhance the reform work being led by the Prime Minister and Premiers.

At some time in the future the AHCRA, with the support of health departments, will run a national meeting on aspects of health care reform. The health care principles of the Alliance are listed in the Communique from its 2003 Summit (see at http://www.ruralhealth.org.au - go to Publications and News; Other papers; and see the entry for 8 August 2003).

At the Sydney meeting the AHCRA also agreed on steps to further enhance its profile and systems of operation, including through the production of a new prospectus and a website.

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From:
Subject: Australian Rural and Remote Health Professional Scholarship Scheme (ARRHPSS) - 2006 funding round now open
Importance: High

Applications are invited from suitably qualified rural and remote clinical health professionals (not including medical or nursing professionals), including Aboriginal Health Workers, for financial scholarships to assist in undertaking a range of postgraduate professional education activities including clinical placements, short courses, postgraduate tertiary courses and attendance at professional conferences.

Application package (including eligibility and selection criteria) can be accessed at http://www.sarrah.org.au/Scholarship/aboutus.asp

Closing date for applications is 16th September 2005

For further information contact:
Administration Officer
Email: rhps@ruralhealth.org.au
Phone: (02) 6162 0321

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From: Dennis Pashen
Subject: Mt Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health Conference August 2005

Conference Program for "Vague and Indecent", the biennial NW Qld Remote Health Conference is available at http://www.micrrh.jcu.edu.au/conference-2005/conference-main.htm

Remote Workforce is our main feature and we have some well known speakers. Our main keynote speaker is Nikki Katalanos, the Director of the University of New Mexico Physicians Assistant Program.

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From: Kim Webber
Subject: Raising Awareness of Depression in Rural and Remote Australia

The beyondblue Rotary Health Safari will be travelling around Australia visiting more than 400 communities between July and December 2005.

The Safari is being undertaken in a purpose built Winnebago motorhome. beyondblue material on depression is available on board together with computers with specially-designed interactive software.

The Safari will assist beyondblue to raise awareness of depression and anxiety, and help to reduce the stigma associated with the illness. We know there are close to a million people with depression and related disorders in Australia - many are without information or assistance.

Along the Safari route beyondblue will hold more than 20 community forums. At the beyondblue forums a high-profile speaker will share the stage with local community residents and health professionals who will offer information on depression and advice on where to get help. If you would like more information on the beyondblue forums, please go to http://www.beyondblue.org.au or contact Kim Webber on kim.webber@beyondblue.org.au.

In addition, local Rotary clubs will also be organising forums and community activities when the Winnebago stops in all locations. If you would like know about activities in your local area, go to http://www.rotaryhealthsafari.com.au or contact your local Rotary club.

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From: Gordon Gregory
Subject: Submission to Productivity Commission Inquiry into health workforce

The National Healthcare Forum is planning to make a submission to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into the health workforce. The Forum, facilitated by Professor Paul Martin, was initially established after the 2002 publication of the Treasury's Inter Generational Report (as one of the Budget Papers). The IGR alerted the public and policy makers to the increasing national health care costs resulting from an ageing population and declining workforce participation rates. Among other things, the NHF has been consistently arguing that health expenditure should be evaluated as an investment in productivity and well-being, not merely as a cost. This will entail new measurement of the productive and savings effects of health services.

A meeting of the NHF in Canberra this week brought together people from health professional and carer organisations, many of which are making their own submission to the Productivity Commission. The purpose of the Forum's submission will be to emphasise some of the issues which transcend professional boundaries and which are vital aspects of the PC Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

It is expected that such issues might include the potential value of a national strategy for self-managed care, reducing barriers to the mobility and flexibility of health care workers (for instance, across State borders), enabling the work of health care teams, and integration of strategies and programs that impact on health eg regional development and health infrastructure planning.

Preliminary Submissions are due to the Commission this week (31 July).

One of the NHF's earlier publications is at http://www.ruralhealth.org.au - go to Publications and News; Other papers; and see the entry for 8 December 2003).

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From: Clair North
Subject: "Chronic Renal Disease" Tuesday 9th August 2005 Live Rural Health Education Foundation National Satellite TV Broadcast

This program examines the continuum of Chronic kidney (renal) disease (CKD), identifies risk factors and discusses what management plans should be triggered by these risk factors. Primary prevention models for the management of CKD, and treatment strategies across the continuum of disease will be included. The program also examines what has been learnt from CKD interventions in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, and how this knowledge can be transferred and applied more broadly.

Program information can be found at http://www.rhef.com.au/programs/508/508.html

Contact: Rural Health Education Foundation via email rhef@rhef.com.au or telephone (02) 6232-5480.

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AMA PRESIDENT SPEECH TO NATIONAL PRESS CLUB ON OVERSEAS TRAINED DOCTORS

Extract: "There is a dangerous shortage of doctors within our system. But there is also a lack of understanding of their rigorous training and the value of a complete medical education.

"The Government got it wrong back in 1996 when it cut back on medical training numbers and restricted provider numbers. They did it at precisely the time we were going into deficit supply. Now we are paying the price.

"We have historically relied on OTDs to top up our shortages and reduce the pressure on the doctors working in our system over the years. They provided a flexible way to even out the workforce supply.

"But they have now become a permanent structural feature and we have not acknowledged them as such. We need to acknowledge them formally as an integral part of our medical workforce.

"More than 20 per cent of our doctors are overseas trained. In country areas, more than 30 per cent are overseas trained. In some places, the only doctors they can get have come from overseas."

The full text of Dr Haikerwal's speech is at http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-6EG7CN

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From: Ann.Bazeos@health.gov.au
Subject: Managing Pain Using Self-Management Approaches: Evidence and Implementation

The Managing Pain Using Self-Management Approaches: Evidence and Implementation half-day Workshop is being hosted by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing's Sharing Health Care Initiative on 19 August 2005 in Sydney. The Workshop is to provide the latest research and evidence for Chronic Condition Self-Management in Australia and internationally. Cost $100. Information / registration contact: DC Conferences,
Phone: (02) 9954 4400. Website: http://www.dcconferences.com.au/pinp2005

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From: Cecilia Weuffen
Subject: 2005 Rural Victorian Alcohol & Drug Conference

Workers from rural Victoria's AoD sector will have the opportunity to network, engage in education, and learn from remarkable people doing remarkable things in their field. The two day Conference will be held in August and include:
Conference Satellite: Wednesday 10 August
Two day Conference: Thursday 11 & Friday 12 August
Conference Expo: Thursday 11 & Friday 12 August
Conference Dinner: Thursday 11 August: 7.00pm onwards and incorporates the 2005 Rural Victorian Alcohol & Drug 'Awards for Excellence'

Visit the NEW conference website: http://www.wadac.wrad.org.au click on the 'Conference' tab and then '2005 Conference' tab to find out about the main components of this year's conference. You can even download Conference programs and registration forms in this area or in the 'Register' section.

Venue: Warrnambool Entertainment Centre, Cnr Liebig & Timor Streets, Warrnambool
Enquiries: Cecilia Weuffen, Conference Manager
Phone: 0418 520 976
Email: enquiries@wadac.wrad.org.au.

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EDITOR - AJRH

The Journal: The Australian Journal of Rural Health, published by Blackwell Publishing Asia (BPA), is the official journal of the National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA), the Association for Australian Rural Nurses, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health, and the Council for Remote Area Nurses of Australia.

The Editor: The Board of Management seeks to appoint an Honorary Editor who is committed to advancing the health of rural Australians through publication and distribution of research and scholarly articles dealing with rural health issues in Australia and internationally. The Editor will maintain the highest standards of scholarly publication with an emphasis on practical issues confronting rural health practitioners, educators, administrators, policy-makers, and health science students.

The role: The Editor receives all submitted articles, allocates them to reviewers, makes publishing recommendations based on these reviews, and works closely with BPA, the publisher, and the Journal's owner, the NRHA. There is a considerable liaison role in promoting the Journal and its mission, and in attracting articles.

Essential qualifications: The successful applicant will have experience and qualifications in one or more of the following: health care, rural health, health policy, education, journalism, and professional publishing. They will have a demonstrated commitment to rural health.

Honorarium: The position is honorary. Administrative assistance, or an amount for administration, is available.

Term of appointment: Three years with the right to apply for a further term of two years. Commencement in early 2006 or by negotiation.

Applications: ajrh@ruralhealth.org.au or 02 6285 4660 by the end of October 2005.

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PARTYline May 2005 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 at http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/nrhapublic/Index.cfm?Category=PartyLine or receive a hard copy by emailing partyline@ruralhealth.org.au

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From: Clair North
Subject: Rural Health Education Foundation (RHEF) Timetable - to November 2005

RHEF has released its confirmed schedule of accredited satellite television broadcasts for the period July to November 2005. Over this period there are 10 programs that can be viewed on release usually on Tuesday and Wednesday nights, with repeats during Friday daytime on the RHEF satellite system. All programs can be viewed any time afterwards via web-streaming on their website. Information about all programs, times and access can be found by following this link http://www.rhef.com.au/timetable/timetable.html.

Scheduled programs July to November:

Tues 9 August - Post-streptococcal Renal Disease
Tues 30 August - Maternal and Infant Care (Aboriginal* Health)
Tues 13 Sept - Type 1 Diabetes
Tues 27 Sept - “Growing Healthy Aboriginal* Kids” The Early Years: 1-5
Tues 18 Oct - Immunisation Update
Tues 15 Nov - Colorectal Cancer: Screening

For more information or updates on programs, go to the Foundation's website http://www.rhef.com.au or contact the Foundation at rhef@rhef.com.au or (02) 62325480

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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 August 2005 issue of the journal is available online now at http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/links/toc/ajr

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INDIGENOUS HEALTH SPENDING UP, BUT RELATIVITIES HAVE CHANGED LITTLE

Estimated expenditure on health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people rose between 1998-99 and 2001-02, from $1.4 billion to $1.8 billion, according to a report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). The share of national health spending going to Indigenous people increased from 2.5% to 2.8%.

Expenditures on health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, 2001-02 shows that per person health spending on Indigenous people in 2001-02 was $3,901 compared with $3,308 for non-Indigenous people, a ratio of 1.18 to 1.

Head of the AIHW's Health and Welfare Expenditure Unit, Tony Hynes, said that given the uncertainties and complexities surrounding these measurements, 'it's fair to say that the relative position of the two populations, in terms of health expenditure, had changed little since 1998-99, when the ratio was 1.22 to 1'.

'There are considerable differences in the mix and relative costs of health goods and services used by Indigenous Australians compared with non-Indigenous Australians. 'The overall spending ratio therefore does not necessarily indicate that Indigenous people use more health services. In fact many services to Indigenous people are more costly to deliver, both because of geography, and because many health services have to be provided in different ways to the mainstream so that Indigenous people will use them', Mr Hynes said.

The AIHW statement is at http://www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2005/mr20050720.cfm and the full report is at http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10147

An ABC report on the release is at http://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2005/s1418849.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 and further information is available at national@lifeline.org.au and http://www.lifeline.org.au

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NEW ARTICLES IN RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH

''Lost in translation'?: Developing assessment criteria that value rural practice'
There is considerable international effort to develop appropriate education and training for rural practice. But, do our assessment processes undermine or reinforce these good intentions?
http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=420

'The impact of point of care testing on diabetes services along Victoria's Mallee Track: Results of a community-based diabetes risk assessment and management program'
Can new technology help rural clinicians deal with chronic disease? New evidence in relation to point of care pathology and diabetes in rural communities.
http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=371

'Defibrillation beliefs of rural nurses: Focus group discussions guided by the Theory of Planned Behaviour'
Just because a rural clinician is trained and allowed to undertake an emergency intervention doesn't mean they will do it when the situation arises. Why? This study explores this important issue.
http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=322

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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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SCHOLARSHIPS TO SUPPORT INDIGENOUS HEALTH EDUCATION

The Minister for Health and Ageing, Tony Abbott, said people wishing to apply for the 2006 Puggy Hunter Scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to undertake health studies have until 12 August before applications close. The scholarships provide opportunities for Indigenous people to undertake supported university and TAFE studies in health fields such as medicine, allied health, nursing and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Work. The scholarship scheme was named after the late Dr Arnold (Puggy) Hunter as a tribute to his outstanding contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. The scholarships are worth up to $15,000 per student per year.

The application forms and information booklet for the Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarship Scheme can be found at the Royal College of Nursing, Australia web site http://www.rcna.org.au/pages/puggy.php or by telephoning 1800 688 628. Applications will close on 12 August 2005.

The full text of Mr Abbott's statement is at http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/health-mediarel-yr2005-ta-abb092.htm

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'RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH PAPERS 1991 - 2005' CD OUT SOON

This CD is a valuable resource for students, academics, researchers and policy writers in the field of rural, regional and remote health. The 1,800 separate authored documents contain 17,000 pages of information and are searchable by key words and phrases.

The CD includes:
* Full proceedings of the 8th National Rural Health Conference, Alice Springs, March 2005
* Healthy Horizons Outlook 2003–2007
* PARTYline newsletters
* The Australian Journal of Rural Health 1992–2004
* Full proceedings of the Infront Outback Rural Health Scientific Conferences
* The Alliance's Rural Health Information Papers
* The Alliance's Annual reports

The CD is provided free of charge to all friends of the Alliance. If you would like to receive a copy of the CD go to the friends page on this site and fill in the membership form and return it with your payment to: National Rural Health Alliance, PO Box 280, DEAKIN WEST ACT 2600.

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NEW GROG BOOK TO ASSIST INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

The Commonwealth Government has funded a new book aimed at helping Indigenous communities and health workers better manage alcohol-related problems. The Grog Book: Strengthening Indigenous Community Action on Alcohol Revised Edition, written by Dr Maggie Brady, is a resource book with practical advice on how to manage alcohol problems at the community level and how to increase community awareness of alcohol abuse.

The full text of Mr Abbott's statement is at http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/health-mediarel-yr2005-ta-abb091.htm

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URBAN-RURAL GP LOCUM INITIATIVE

At the end of this month the NSW Rural Doctors Netowrk is launching an initiative to up-skill urban GPs so they can work as locums in rural and remote NSW.

Sydney doctors have been invited to attend an RDN-sponsored Emergency Life Support (ELS) course at Balmain Hospital’s General Practice Casualty on 29-31 July 2005. Those who successfully complete the course will, through RDN, in the following two years provide an agreed amount of casual locum services for rural and remote practices in NSW. This strategy is designed to encourage urban-based GPs to provide rural locum services on a more regular basis, or possibly relocate to a rural practice.

For further information on this initiative, please contact Sallie Scoggin at RDN, telephone 02 4929 1811.

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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 2,923 email addresses. Please forward a copy to any colleague you think may be interested.

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Full text of Media Release, 19 July 2005

Let's make more of advanced nursing practice - new report

Expert nurses, with advanced nursing practice, can make a major contribution to improved health outcomes for people living in rural and remote areas. Issues affecting expert nurses - including nurse practitioners - need to be more widely understood. In particular, State, Territory and the Australian governments need to check the way legislation and regulation currently impact on advanced nursing practice. Legislation should be in place that supports and enhances advanced nursing practice in rural and remote areas.

Expert nurses are those whose roles allow for increased clinical discretion, responsibility and autonomy. Some of them have additional authorisation from nurse regulatory authorities and work as nurse practitioners, with their role specifically authorised by legislation and professional regulation.

In addition to the particular issues affecting advanced nursing practice, there are the workforce barriers for nurses that are familiar to all health professionals in rural and remote areas. They include lack of appropriate remuneration, poor living and working conditions, professional isolation, limited access to information technology (and support in its use), less access to professional development, and no succession planning. The Alliance's new paper includes some discussion of these issues and a checklist of tips for both employers and nurses.

It would further strengthen national leadership and credibility on these and related issues if the Department of Health and Ageing augmented its capacity on nursing. The Department is now leading important policy and program work on nursing and a Director of Nursing Policy (however titled) would help.

Governments should work with universities and other training institutions to develop new approaches to the provision of postgraduate education for nurses, especially in rural and remote centres, including measures to address the costs of such qualifications. For their part, universities could do more to list and promote their current advanced nursing practice education programs, so that nurses, employers and others can identify appropriate training pathways.

The Alliance's Paper on advanced nursing practice is now available at http://www.ruralhealth.org.au or in hard copy.