Eforum Newsletter: NRHA eforum 28 April 2006

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum – 28 April 2006
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9th NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE - CALL FOR PAPERS NOW OPEN ONLINE

It only seems five minutes since we welcomed you all to Alice Springs. How time flies when we're having fun! Those of you who were there will remember the central commitment we made to achieving equal health for people in remote and rural areas by 2020. We aren't there yet, and the 9th Conference in Albury represents the next major opportunity for us to check progress and reflect on our successes and continuing challenges.

There is a lot happening in rural and remote health, even though we are not apparently central to the current political agenda. Those things that are on top of the agenda, however, are certainly related to health and well-being. At national and international levels we are exhorted to be alert but not alarmed. This surely weighs on our thoughts, words and deeds and cannot be divorced from the way we feel as individuals or the way we behave as communities. At the national level we are engaged in major reform of the health system. Questions are being asked about how the health system is funded, the shape of Medicare, how hospitals operate, the relationship between Commonwealth and State agencies, and the future of our health workforce. All of these have rural and remote dimensions, and from all of them will flow changes for people on the ground in non-metropolitan areas. We must stay close to these changes: inform them, guide them and evaluate them.

The Conference in Albury is a chance for us all to get together again to focus on the evidence about where we are up to and how we can improve our circumstances. The evidence we need comes not only from the work of researchers and academics, but also from the reports of consumers and managers about realities on the ground and in the corridors of power. It should surely be possible for us to bring together experiences from the past decade and from various parts of rural and remote Australia to agree on what works best, and why.

I therefore encourage you to attend the Conference and to have your say. You can be assured that the NRHA will provide you with a very warm welcome and a well-managed event. In addition to the evidence you will hear, there will be a range of activity to ensure that you are kept entertained and . There will be an arts-in-health stream, an exhibition, networking time, and the opportunity to meet new and old friends.

We pride ourselves on making sure that the Conference is not a talkfest but an opportunity to agree on action we can collaboratively pursue. We need your input, your ideas and your support to ensure that, as soon as possible, people in rural and remote areas have the same opportunities and the same health as people in our major cities.

I look forward to seeing you in Albury.

John Wakerman
Chairperson

Authors are invited and encouraged to submit an abstract for consideration by the Conference Committee. Abstracts for contributed papers will be accepted online until Friday 14 July 2006. Emailed abstracts must be received by the same date, but please contact speakers@ruralhealth.org.au for alternative abstract guidelines if you intend to email your abstract. The Infront/Outback stream will be comprised of refereed papers and there will also be a General stream. Speakers are encouraged to download and review the Guidelines for Submission of Abstracts document (178 kB pdf) at http://9thnrhc.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/papers/Abstract%20Guidelines%20FINAL.pdf before submitting an abstract.

To submit your abstract for the 9th National Rural Health Conference you will be required to provide:
* the full contact details of a key contact (the Submitting Author);
* details of the abstract, including abstract title, names and affiliations of authors/co-authors;
* preferred presentation type (papers, poster or workshop);
* key words;
* audiovisual requirements; and,
* biographies of the presenting author(s).

For more detailed instructions, please see the Abstract Submission Requirements page at http://9thnrhc.ruralhealth.org.au/contacts/?IntContId=46&IntCatId=8

Please go to https://www.nrha.net.au/ei/getdemo.ei?id=23&s=_1EG0M9SKN to lodge your abstract online. If you have questions regarding the online abstract submission process, please contact speakers@ruralhealth.org.au. All abstracts will be read as part of the selection process by the Conference organisers. Submitting an abstract does not guarantee that your paper will be accepted. The selection process will be finalised and all authors will be notified in September 2006.

The Conference website is at http://9thnrhc.ruralhealth.org.au/?IntContId=38

For further information, contact:
The 9th National Rural Health Conference
PO Box 280
DEAKIN WEST ACT 2600
Phone: 02 6285 4660
Fax: 02 6285 4670
Email: conference@ruralhealth.org.au

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From: Clair North
Subject: Lung Cancer - REPEAT national satellite television broadcast

Tuesday 9th May 8:00pm EST (repeated Friday 12th May 12:30pm EST)
Presented by the Rural Health Education Foundation
Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing

This program aims to provide information for primary care providers on the prevention, early diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer for people living in rural and remote Australia.

Panellists:
Chair: Dr Norman Swan, Presenter of the Health Report on ABC Radio National.
Assoc. Prof David Ball, Radiation Oncologist, Peter MacCallum Institute VIC.
Prof Brian McCaughan, Thoracic Surgeon, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Sydney & Co-Chair, Acute Care Implementation Group - NSW Government.
Assoc. Prof Michael Boyer, Head Medical Oncology, Sydney Cancer Centre.
Dr Margherita Nicoletti, Palliative Care Physician, Canberra.
Prof Nick Zwar, General Practitioner & Director, School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of NSW.
Sue McCullough, lung cancer survivor, NSW.

For details about the program visit http://www.rhef.com.au/programs/501/501.html

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From: Tan, Foong-Ee"
Subject: Manuscript submissions to The Australian Journal of Rural Health

Manuscript submissions to The Australian Journal of Rural Health can now be made online through Manuscript Central. Easy and fast submission process; track the progress of your article at any time; safe and secure site. Simply log on to http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ajrh to submit your manuscript today and share the wealth of your knowledge. Full author instructions and guidelines can be found at the AJRH homepage - http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/ajr

The April 2006 issue of the journal is available online now at http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/links/toc/ajr. Articles include:
* National health policy: What does this mean for rural mental health research?
* Factors influencing rural health care professionals' access to continuing professional education
* Caregivers' inability to identify childhood adiposity: A cross-sectional survey of rural children and their caregivers' attitudes
* Exploration of self-identified education needs of alcohol and other drug workers
* Tobacco smoking habits among a cross-section of rural physicians in China
* Utilisation and clinical efficacy of echocardiography in a regional hospital
* Mental health referral role of rural financial counsellors
* Alcohol problems and psychological health in a remote Indigenous Australian community: A preliminary quantitative study
* Australian medical students' intentions in relation to practice location: Their short- and long-term time frame
* Strength in difference
* AARN and CRANA: Peak rural and remote nursing bodies welcome Medicare item for maternity care.
* ACRRM supports next crop of rural proceduralists.

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NEW ARTICLES IN "RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH"

What is the future demographic of rural communities?
This article from Western Australia provides a clear and thought-provoking view
http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=551

Gallinyalla: a town of substance? A descriptive study of alcohol, tobacco, medicines and other drug use in a rural setting
What do indigenous people see as the major concerns in relation to substance abuse in their rural community? This article documents the views from an Australian regional centre.
http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=491

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$30m TRAINING FOR REMOTE AGED-CARE STAFF

Personal care staff in small aged-care facilities in rural and isolated locations will receive continued support to improve their skills, with funding of $30 million over four years, the Minister for Ageing, Senator Santo Santoro, has announced.

"Another four years of the Support for Aged Care Training (SACT) program will provide personal care staff with relevant vocational education and training to assist them to upgrade their skills," Senator Santoro said.

More information about the Support for Aged Care Training program is available from the Residential Aged Care Workforce Section, Department of Health and Ageing, telephone (02) 6289 1547. The full text of Senator Santoro's statement is at http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/content/health-mediarel-yr2006-ss-san036.htm

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Join friends of the Alliance in 2006. By joining friends you will receive the updated CD 'Rural and Remote Health Papers 1991-2005', a 2006 friends certificate , regular issues of PARTYline newsletter, and be eligible for a discounted registration at the 9th National Rural Health Conference to be held in Albury in March 2007. Membership of friends would also give you the opportunity to be involved more closely with the Alliance's information dissemination and policy work. You will become part of a group of people who contribute to and support the work of the National Rural Health Alliance.

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NEW MEDICARE ITEMS FOR INDIGENOUS HEALTH, REFUGEES AND PALLIATIVE CARE

Medicare funded health checks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and for refugee and other humanitarian entrants will be listed on the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) from May 1. A new item recognising the role of specialists in pain and palliative medicine, and items covering immunisation and wound-management by registered Aboriginal Health Workers in the Northern Territory on behalf of a GP will also be listed. The full text of the statement by Health Minister Tony Abbott is at
http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/health-mediarel-yr2006-ta-abb050.htm

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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. The December edition (No. 24) of PARTYline is 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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HOUSEHOLD WEALTH AND WEALTH DISTRIBUTION, AUSTRALIA, 2003-04
(ABS Cat 6554.0, released 27 April 2006)

Average net worth varies between states and territories and between capital cities and elsewhere. In 2003-04, Tasmanian households recorded the lowest mean net worth at $325,000, or 31% below the average for all Australian households. Sydney households had a mean net worth of $641,000, 27% above the capital city average of $504,000 and 37% above the average of $468,000 for all Australian households. The mean net worth of $504,000 for capital city households was 24% above the mean of $405,000 for households in the remainder of Australia. All ABS publications are available at http://www.abs.gov.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 and further information is available at national@lifeline.org.au and http://www.lifeline.org.au

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Extract from Australian Doctor E-NEWS

IMGS PUT TO THE TEST FOR AREA-OF-NEED JOBS (12-Apr-2006)
Some international medical graduates are expected to face a clinical examination before being allowed to work as rural GPs in Victoria, under a more rigorous policy being finalised by the state's medical board.
http://www.australiandoctor.com.au/articles/FC/0C03ECFC.asp

GPS' PRIVACY CONCERNS STALL E-HEALTH INITIATIVE (12-Apr-2006)
GPs have refused to participate in a state-based electronic health records pilot program without guarantees of indemnity from legal action in the event of any privacy breaches.
http://www.australiandoctor.com.au/articles/F8/0C03EAF8.asp

CALL TO WIDEN ABORIGINAL HEALTH REBATE (12-Apr-2006)
Aboriginal health workers in the NT will soon have access to a new Medicare rebate for providing immunisations and wound management, but rural doctors are calling for the rebate to be expanded to cover other states and a broader range of clinical services.
http://www.australiandoctor.com.au/articles/58/0C03EB58.asp

MORE NURSE SERVICES, BUT GPS STILL GATEKEEPERS (20-Apr-2006)
A radical expansion of MBS items for practice nurses is being promised in a bid to ease the workforce pressures facing general practice - but Federal Health Minister Mr Tony Abbott has insisted there will be no job substitution without the prior approval of GPs.
http://www.australiandoctor.com.au/articles/CF/0C03F0CF.asp

AUSTRALIA LANGUISHES IN HEALTH CARE SURVEY (20-Apr-2006)
The Australian health system performs below average when compared with five of its Western counterparts, a report from a US health research foundation has found.
http://www.australiandoctor.com.au/articles/77/0C03EE77.asp

BULK-BILLING RATES 'FAIL TO MEASURE EQUITY' (27-Apr-2006)
The political obsession with boosting bulk-billing rates has been criticised by the former head of the Federal Health Department, who claims the rates fail as a measure of equity of access to primary care.
http://www.australiandoctor.com.au/articles/24/0C03F724.asp

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RURAL MEDICAL WORKFORCE STRATEGIES NEED INCENTIVES

The Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) has urged the Australian Government to earmark the majority of new medical school places announced recently for rural and remote practice if the extreme shortage of doctors in the bush is to be reversed. However these places, including those in the bonded scheme, need appropriate support mechanisms if they are to be successful future workforce strategies. The RDAA statement is at http://www.rdaa.com.au/uploaded_documents/Rural%20Medical%20Workforce%20Strategies%20Need%20Incentives%20--%20April%202006.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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AMA RURAL REFERENCE GROUP FORMALLY REJECTS BONDED MEDICAL PLACES

The AMA Rural Reference Group (AMARRG) has passed a motion formally rejecting unfunded bonded medical places, saying they are ineffective in attracting doctors to move to the country and stay in country practice for the long term. AMARRG members are GPs, specialists, and doctors in training who live and work in rural and regional Australia.

The AMARRG passed the following motion:

The AMA Rural Reference Group endorses existing AMA policies that oppose the unfunded bonding of medical schools places as international evidence demonstrates that such policies are ineffective in delivering sustainable medical workforce increases in areas of workforce shortage. The AMARRG strongly believes that participation in schemes that include a return of service obligation should be incentive based.

The AMARRG considers that conditions imposed on participants must be fair and equitable, and the return of service obligation should not exceed the length of the medical degree. All periods of service in workforce shortage areas following graduation from medical school should count towards the return of service obligation.

The full text of the AMA statement is at http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-6P24E7

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RURAL HEALTH ON THE WEB
(From GoogleAlert, http://www.googlealert.com/)

North Carolina Rural Health Research and Policy Analysis
http://www.schsr.unc.edu/research_programs/rural_program/rhp.html

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PRODUCTIVE REFORM IN A FEDERAL SYSTEM

The Productivity Commission released the proceedings of a roundtable on Productive Reform in a Federal System conducted in October 2005. The sessions covered: institutional frameworks to promote productive outcomes; health reform; labour market reform; freight transport reform; and the way forward. The National Rural Health Alliance was the only non-Government health sector organisation represented at the Roundtable. The proceedings are available at http://www.pc.gov.au/research/confproc/productivereform/index.html

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HEART WEEK - April 30/6 Mayh 2006

http://www.heartfoundation.com.au/index.cfm?page=246

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HEALTH RESEARCH WORKSHOP FOR QLD NURSES

The Centre for Rural and Remote Area Health (CRRAH) is undertaking a study to identify and prioritise the health research needs of Southern Queensland communities. The workshop will be held in Toowomba on 18th May 2006. For more information please contact:
Rob Eley
Centre for Rural and Remote Area Health
Faculty of Sciences
University of Southern Queensland
Toowoomba Qld 4350
Telephone: 07 4631 5477
Fax: 07 4631 5452
Email: eleyr@usq.edu.au

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From: Ann Larson
Subject: The Rural e-Health Forum, 18-19 May 2006, Geraldton WA

Will innovations in e-Health live up to their extraordinary promise? It has been touted as a mechanism to dissolve physical distance, bring the knowledge of the specialist into rural surgeries, remote health clinics and multipurpose services, and enable secure exchange of vital medical information. Robots in district hospitals, data vaults of important health information for transient populations, remote specialist consults through email and videoconferencing are all a reality. In many cases good care is reaching people who in the past had to do without.

But it is time to take stock. What works in rural and remote settings? What are the barriers to greater adoption? What technological advances are around the corner and what should we be doing now? What should be our priorities?

On 18 and 19 May there will be a Rural e-Health Forum in Geraldton. This is your chance to talk with clinicians who are using new technologies, with the inventors designing the next big thing, with the industry and with policy makers. The Forum is jointly organised by CUCRH, the Midwest Division of General Practice and the Centre of Excellence in e-Medicine.

See the forum website http://www.cucrh.uwa.edu.au/eHealth

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From: Kremser, Thea
Subject: Breast cancer training workshop for Indigenous health workers

The National Breast Cancer Centre will be holding a training workshop for Indigenous Health Workers in Cairns on Friday 26 May 2006. The National Breast Cancer Centre undertakes numerous initiatives to improve care in breast and ovarian cancer, and we aim to encourage best practice, improve health worker skills and encourage equity of access to optimal care and information for Australian women with breast cancer.

The training workshop has been developed in consultation with Indigenous health workers from across Australia who work with other Indigenous health workers and with Indigenous women with breast cancer. The workshop aims to assist Indigenous health workers in improving their knowledge of breast cancer and how it affects women in their communities.

If there is any additional information I can give you, please do not hesitate to contact me directly on 02 9036 3068.

Thea Kremser
Project Officer
National Breast Cancer Centre
92 Parramatta Road Camperdown NSW 2050
Direct Telephone +61 2 9036 3068
Facsimile +61 2 9036 3077 www.nbcc.org.au

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AUSTRALIA'S HEALTH 2006 CONFERENCE
21 June 2006, Hyatt Hotel Canberra, Commonwealth Avenue, Yarralumla

This one day conference, held in Canberra, provides insights into key issues facing Australia's health services and resources, chronic diseases, and highlights trends and concerns in population health. The conference will assess current health statistics and demonstrate the relevance of these figures to existing and future health practices and reforms.

The one-day program commences with the launch of Australia's health 2006 by the Hon. Tony Abbott MP, Minister for Health and Ageing. This publication is the nation's most comprehensive and authoritative source of health statistics and related information. All delegates receive a complimentary copy of this important statistical resource.

The conference program, available at http://www.aihw.gov.au/eventsdiary/ah06/program.cfm includes keynote addresses by eminent speakers, with sessions being held in a broad spectrum of health arenas including:
* Socioeconomic inequalities
* Workforce planning
* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health
* Changing face of primary healthcare
* Chronic diseases
* Health as an economic growth sector
* Rural health

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From: Partridge, Michael
Subject: 2006 Health Outcomes Conference

HEALTH OUTCOMES 2006: MANAGING HEALTH AND DISEASE IN TODAY'S SOCIETY

12th Annual Health outcomes Conference
9 - 10 August 2006
Rydges Lakeside, Canberra, ACT
Call for Papers closes 10 March 2006
http://www.uow.edu.au/commerce/ahoc/upcomingconference.html
michael.partridge@act.gov.au

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7th WONCA RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

Transforming Rural Practice Through Education
8-15 September 2006
Seattle, WA, USA
http://www.ruralwonca2006.com

Wonca is the World Organisation of Family Doctors, which has a specific Working Party on Rural Practice. This Working Party holds an annual conference on rural health and has produced a number of policy documents regarding rural health (for more information about Wonca, go to http://www.globalfamilydoctor.com).

WONCA Rural Conference
8-10 September 2006
University of Washington campus
Clinical Conference
11-13 September 2006
34th Annual Advances in Family Practice and Primary Care
University of Washington campus
Post Conference
13-15 September 2006
Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge - Anchorage, Alaska

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THE NATIONAL SARRAH CONFERENCE
Building bridges ….. Crossing borders
A Conference for Rural and Remote Allied Health Professionals
13 – 16 September 2006
Albury Convention Centre
ALBURY, NSW

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN
PROGRAM AVAILABLE
Information available on the website – http://www.sarrah.org.au

The 2006 National SARRAH Conference
PO Box 74
DEAKIN WEST ACT 2600
Phone: 02 6285 4660
Fax: 02 6285 4670
Email: conference@ruralhealth.org.au or register@ruralhealth.org.au
Website:http://www.sarrah.org.au

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AARN NATIONAL CONFERENCE
'Moving with the Times'
Contemporary issues in rural nursing practice
25 - 27 October 2006, Brisbane

Call for abstracts soon to be announced - see http://www.aarn.asn.au/ for details

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From: Michelle Magro
Subject: WHA & CHA CONFERENCE

The joint conference of Women's Hospitals Australasia and Children's Hospitals Australasia will be held at The Country Club Resort, in the delightful city of Launceston, Tasmania, 13-17 November this year.

This year's conference theme is TEAM and will explore how effective teams can significantly improve quality of care and service delivery. Given the increasing trend toward health service redesign, and a move away from hierarchical structures, the health care 'team' is probably the most important consideration in advancing healthcare over the next decade. As technology advances, skill mix needs change, workforce shortages increase the need for flexibility within the health workforce, and as consumer expectations increase they become a fundamental member of the healthcare team.

Monday 13 November: Clinical Forum 'CUBS' - (Care of Unwell Babies)
Tuesday 14 November: WHA Conference
Wednesday 15 November: Joint WHA & CHA Conference
Thursday 16 November: CHA Conference
Friday 17 November: Clinical Forum - Better Integration of Paediatric Acute & Community Care

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From: Michael Gleeson
Subject: ACRRM Call for Abstracts for the ACRRM 4th Scientific Forum

Medical practitioners, specialists, allied health professionals, academics and students are invited to submit abstracts for Australia's leading medical conference in health care in rural and remote settings.

The Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) will conduct its 4th Scientific Forum at the University of Adelaide on 16-19 November 2006 and will present research, forum discussions, plenary sessions and clinical workshops specifically on the practical implementation of Rural and Remote Medicine.

ACRRM Academic Director Assoc. Prof. Elizabeth Chalmers said the conference content would examine the latest thinking and modern clinical practices for caring for Australians in regional and rural Australia.

She said the theme “Practising Rural and Remote Medicine – Moving Forward” captured the positive future for the discipline.

Assoc. Prof. Chalmers also said that speakers from a variety of professional groups would be invited to this year's conference, including indigenous health experts, nurses, medical specialists, and allied health practitioners, as each had an important role to play in the collaborative provision of medical care in the bush.

Individuals interested in preparing presentations, posters or workshops for the ACRRM 4th Scientific Forum can obtain more information by visiting the ACRRM web site at http://www.acrrm.org.au or by contacting ACRRM on 1800 223 226.

The deadline for abstracts is 12 May 2006.

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON "DIVERSITY IN AGEING" ANNOUNCED FOR SYDNEY

The Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG) has announced it will hold its 2006 National Conference in Sydney during November. To be held 22 – 24 November 2006 at the Wesley Centre the Conference will focus on the theme ‘Diversity in Ageing.’

The conference is the major annual activity of the Australian Association of Gerontology (AAG), which brings together professionals interested in promoting education and research into all aspects of ageing. The Association encourages cross disciplinary exchange of ideas amongst professionals including clinicians, therapists, social scientists, economists and demographers. The anticipated 350 delegates are expected to include medical practitioners, researchers, nurses, social workers, psychologists, social scientists, music therapists, economists, demographers, geographers and consumers interested in the field of ageing research, education, service provision and policy.

Further information on the Conference is available on http://www.aag.asn.au/conference2006.htm or by contacting the Conference Managers on 1300 368 783 or email aag@eastcoastconferences.com.au

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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 (do not "reply" to this email - send contributions to 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 2,509 email addresses. Please forward a copy to any colleague you think may be interested.