

The June 2006 issue of the journal is available online now at <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/links/toc/ajr>. Articles include:

- * Incubating desirable change in our health workforce
- * Rural eHealth paradox: It's not just geography!
- * Australian issues in the provision of after-hours primary medical care services in rural communities
- * Far West Area Health Service Mental Health Integration Project: Model for rural Australia?
- * Maternity emergency care: Short course in maternity emergencies for remote area health staff with no midwifery qualifications
- * Rural pharmacy not delivering on its health promotion potential
- * Patterns of drug use and associated harms among rural injecting drug users: Comparisons with metropolitan injecting drug users
- * Demographic analysis of currently registered dentists in Western Australia: Rural urban divide
- * Implementing a 'Men's Health Pitstop' in the Riverina, South-west New South Wales
- * Total learning environment and the implications for rural student nurse retention
- * Chronic pain in the rural arena
- * Grazings

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TWICE AS LIKELY TO DIE
(Extract from farmonline, 4 July 2006)

Agricultural workers are twice as likely to die or suffer serious injury than are workers in any other industry save mining. Latest WorkCover statistics show more than 10,000 serious injuries were sustained in the farm and farm services sectors in NSW between 1998-99 and 2004-05, including 38 deaths.

More than 2600 injuries left farmers and workers with permanent disabilities across the spectrum of rural industries from grain growing to cattle production, cotton ginning, shearing and land clearing.

Figures made available to The Land by NSW Commerce Minister, John Della Bosca, show serious injuries in the agriculture and farm service sectors were at 29.5 and 36.4 rates respectively for every 1000 workers last financial year – compared with just 13.6 for the whole NSW WorkCover Scheme.

The figures are even more significant when viewed against a background of dramatically improving workplace safety in NSW, where total accident figures are now at an 18-year low.

There were 125 work-related deaths in 2004-05, a 5.3pc drop on those of the previous year, and 49,749 injuries – down 4pc.

This article is available at http://www.farmonline.com.au/news_daily.asp?ag_id=35501 - free registration is required.

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BOOST FOR INDIGENOUS HEALTH

Health services for Indigenous mothers, babies, children and people with a chronic disease are to be boosted in 26 locations around Australia as part of the Commonwealth Government's \$102.4 million Healthy for Life program, announced in the 2005-06 Budget. The full text of the announcement by Health Minister Tony Abbott is at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/health-mediarel-yr2006-ta-abb100.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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RAISING CHILD FARM SAFETY AWARENESS

Farming and rural industry representatives met in Canberra this week to develop media strategies to improve the safety of children on Australian farms. A committee of farming parents and child farm safety representatives consulted about 350 people, including educators, health care professionals, farming parents and grandparents, farm and community organisations, business and local government representatives. The full text of the statement by Parliamentary Secretary Sussan Ley is at <http://www.psmaff.gov.au/releases/06/06037sl.html>

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INDIGENOUS STUDENTS ENCOURAGED TO APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

Indigenous students interested in working in the health industry can apply for one of 75 Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarships commencing in 2007. The scholarships are worth \$15,000 a year for each year of study to complete degrees in medicine, nursing, allied health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait health worker courses and health management. 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-abb105.htm>

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Due to an overwhelming number of contributions this quarter, the National Rural Health Alliance produced three editions of PARTYline on the theme of recovery from depression. One edition was produced jointly with beyondblue: the national depression initiative.

Hardcopy subscribers may have already received the two print editions in the mail.

Electronic subscribers can now access all three on our website at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/nrhpublic/Index.cfm?Category=PartyLine>

If you have trouble with this link go to www.ruralhealth.org.au, then to the Publications and News link, then the PARTYline link. Please note: the electronic supplement contains additional material and is only available on our website.

Please let us know if your contact details change or if you no longer wish to receive PARTYline.

Contents of April 2006 editions

Issue 25 - joint NRHA/beyondblue edition (print copy)

- * triathlete fights depression
- * beyondblue initiatives in rural and remote areas
- * personal stories of recovery from depression
- * Indigenous mental health services
- * support for people affected by depression
- * managing depression in men, women and children

Issue 26 (print copy)

- * Independent Living Centre goes bush
- * the joys of Port Augusta
- * personal stories of recovery from depression
- * support services for people with depression
- * support on incontinence, cancer counselling and road trauma

Issue 26 (electronic supplement)

- * the value of local services
- * General Practice mental health care
- * depression in the alcohol and drug sector
- * services for women and youth in rural areas
- * Mental Health Script Program
- * personal stories of recovery from depression

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BOOST FOR RURAL MEDICAL TRAINING IN WA

The Australian Government will provide \$16 million to support the rural clinical school attached to the University of Western Australia and Notre Dame University. The full text of the announcement by Health Minister Tony Abbott is at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/health-mediarel-yr2006-ta-abb103.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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PILOT PROJECT TO PROVIDE LOCUM RELIEF FOR RURAL OBSTETRICIANS

The Commonwealth Government is funding a pilot project to strengthen specialist obstetric services in rural Australia.

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Rural Doctors Association of Australia, and Australian Rural and Remote Workforce Agencies Group (represented by the NSW Rural Doctors Network) will use the government grant to conduct a pilot of the Specialist Obstetrician Locum Scheme. The 15-month pilot will provide subsidised locum support to 20 rural obstetricians.

Nearly 30 per cent of Australian babies are born in rural and remote areas, but only 16 per cent of Australia's practising obstetricians reside and practise in rural Australia. Rural obstetricians also tend to be older on average than those in the cities, with few younger specialists coming in to replace them.

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-abb102.htm>

The full text of the joint statement by the sponsor organisations is at http://www.rdaa.com.au/uploaded_documents/SOLS%20Pilot%20Project%20--%20July%202006.pdf

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Extract from Australian Doctor E-NEWS

IBA HEALTH DITCHES SOFTWARE ARM OVER LACK OF GP INTEREST (21-Jun-2006)

IBA Health's widely hyped bid to capture a greater share of the multi-million-dollar general practice software market has been ditched because of lack of interest from GPs. <http://www.australiandoctor.com.au/articles/F8/OC0417F8.asp>

E-HEALTH SYSTEM CRUCIAL FOR REFORM (21-Jun-2006)

A functioning electronic health records system is crucial to prevent the fragmentation of primary care if governments push ahead with plans to extend the roles of nurses and allied health professionals, a Productivity Commissioner has said. <http://www.australiandoctor.com.au/articles/25/OC040F25.asp>

"However there are also regions in which the situation can clearly be improved - where the delivery of fresh food is jeopardised by seasonal or human issues, and where in some cases delivery is not regular enough to support good health."

"This is obviously a big health issue for the communities concerned and the meeting was attended by a number of health officials and nutritionists," Mr Gregory said. "From the Forum there will be resource materials to help people in remote communities work through the economic and logistical challenges they face. The Forum has also resulted in a new network of technical services that can support the cold chain to remote areas. Much of the information from the Forum will be available soon on CD ROM and the web, thanks to NetSpot Communications. The work of the Forum will also continue through follow-up visits to communities that have sought assistance," Mr Gregory said.

The Forum's work dovetails with the ongoing activity of the Remote Indigenous Stores and Takeaway (RIST) project, which involves five State/Territory and the Australian Government. Support for the Forum was provided by the Australian Department of Health and Ageing and the event was organised for RIST by the NRHA. The NRHA will be following up the work by promoting policy and program ideas related to safe delivery of fresh foods to remote communities.