

Eforum Newsletter: NRHA eforum 10 November 2006

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum – 10 November 2006

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INDIGENOUS DOCTORS AND WORKFORCE AGENCIES WELCOMED INTO ALLIANCE

At its last two meetings, the NRHA Council has admitted to membership of the Alliance the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA) and the Australian Rural and Remote Workforce Agencies Group (ARRWAG). Chair of the Alliance, John Wakerman, gave a warm welcome to both bodies during his address to Council after being re-elected Chairperson for a second year. The full text of the NRHA statement is at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/nrhpublic/Index.cfm?Category=LatestNews> and is reproduced below.

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WANT TO STAND UP FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES? REGISTER FOR ALBURY NEXT MARCH

Drought and the spectre of climate change have brought rural issues closer to centre stage, but where are we with rural health status and health services, and what are the health impacts of continued drought? What are the implications for rural people of current developments in health services, of potential changes in the structure of the health system, the shape of Medicare, how hospitals operate, the relationship between Commonwealth and State agencies, and an over-stretched health workforce?

If you are concerned with the well-being of country communities and the people who live in them, the 9th Conference in Albury is an opportunity to check progress and to reflect on successes, challenges and recent developments. Registration is open for the Conference, being held at Albury from 7-10 March 2007. Program and registration are available on-line at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>

Keynote speakers will include Robert Tickner, Secretary General and CEO of the Australian Red Cross; Rhonda Galbally, CEO of Our Community; Tony McMichael, Australia's leading researcher on the health effects of climate change; Philip Davies, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Health and Ageing; Brian Kelly, head of the NSW Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health; Barbara Pocock, Director of the Centre for Work and Life at the University of South Australia; and former Head of the Department of Health, Andrew Podger.

There will be special workshops on managing chronic kidney disease in rural Australia; dementia; Indigenous health workforce solutions; rural scholarships; and the health benefits of physical skills for older people.

Murray Arts is working with the Alliance to guarantee a good program of arts in health, dealing with both its educational and therapeutic aspects.

Conference organisers 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 activities to ensure you are kept engaged. There will be an arts-in-health stream, an exhibition, networking time, and the opportunity to meet new and old friends.

Bring your views to Albury to help 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.

There will be 100 contributed papers, from both experienced researchers and first-time presenters.

Eight formal pre-Conference events will be held, most of them on Wednesday 7 March, and details of these are also on the Conference website.

This important event should be accessible to most people, thanks to core support from the Department of Health and Ageing through its funding to the NRHA. Other supporters of the Conference include the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), NSW Health, the NSW Department of State and Regional Development, and the Toowoomba Hospital Foundation.

Early Bird Registration is \$737 (with a special rate for enrolled friends of the Alliance) and is available until 15 December 2006.

Information and registration: <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/>
Email: conference@ruralhealth.org.au

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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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AMA CALLS FOR BOOST TO RURAL PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES

The AMA Federal Council has endorsed recommendations from the AMA Rural Reference Group calling for a significant boost to psychiatric services available to rural and regional Australians. The AMA statement is at <http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-6VCVAX>

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August PARTYLine now available at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au/nrhpublic/Index.cfm?Category=PartyLine>. Contents include:

- * medical students Kimberley style
- * core services close to home
- * oral and dental health
- * housing and remote podiatry
- * investing in remote communities
- * choice and access in education
- * fresh food and remote transport
- * Rown Nicks Russell Drysdale Fellowship
- * an Indigenous Outstations policy
- * US recruitment and retention initiatives
- * friends photographic festival
- * 9th Conference update
- * a photographic tribute to rural pets

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ALCOHOL TREATMENT GUIDELINES TO HELP INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

New treatment guidelines that would help health practitioners manage alcohol-related problems experienced by their Indigenous patients were launched on 6 November in Cairns. The full text of the statement by Health Parliamentary Secretary Christopher Pyne is at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/health-mediarel-yr2006-cp-pyn073.htm>

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RURAL HEALTH ON THE WEB
(From <http://www.googlealert.com/>)

Rural Health
Rural health information for consumers, particularly those wishing to undertake rural health studies.
<http://www.dhac.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/Rural+Health-1>

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From: Rural Health Education Foundation
Subject: Multiple Sclerosis – Update on Diagnosis and Management

LIVE national satellite television broadcast
Presented by the Rural Health Education Foundation
Wednesday 15th November 2006 8:00pm AEDT (repeated Friday 17th November 1:30pm AEDT)
Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing

This program alerts health practitioners to the possibility of MS among presenting patients, as well as provides an update on the latest research and clinical expertise in the areas of diagnosis, treatment and management. The program will also discuss the current debate over treatment modalities as well as discuss barriers, and potential solutions to diagnosis, treatment and management in the rural setting.

Panellists include:
Chair: Dr Norman Swan, Presenter of the Health Report on ABC Radio National
Prof John Pollard AO, Bushell Professor of Neurology, University of Sydney; Co-Director of the Nerve Research Foundation & Director of the Brain Mind Institute.
Ms Ros Chapman, Community Support Worker (RN), MS Society NSW/VIC.
Ms Robyn Leece, MS Ambassador NSW/VIC & Registered Nurse, Quirindi NSW.
Dr Geoff Chapman, General Practitioner; Chairman of MS Society of Tasmania & a Director of MS Australia.
Dr Gary Fulcher, Senior Clinical Psychologist/Research Development Officer, MS NSW/VIC

Further details about the program visit <http://www.rhef.com.au/programs/613/613.html>

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RESEARCH GRANT TO HELP INCREASE RURAL DOCTOR NUMBERS

The types of training, service delivery, and government policies that will increase the number of multiskilled doctors in rural Australia will be part of the focus of a \$1.8 million multi-pronged research study, announced in Canberra.

Successful research grant recipient Assoc Prof Dennis Pashen, Vice President of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) said the grant from the Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute is for a systematic review that will develop national policy for the expanding role of "generalists", or doctors with multi-discipline skills that work in rural, remote and Indigenous Australia.

The full text of the ACRRM statement is at <http://www.acrrm.org.au/main.asp?NodeID=278>

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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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"ANOTHER UNDERSPEND IN REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS - RURAL HEALTH" - ALP

The Shadow Minister for Regional Development, Simon Crean, and the Shadow Minister for Health, Julia Gillard, said that with the crisis in rural health, Senate Estimates have revealed the Government has failed to spend 90 per cent of a \$15 million election promise to improve rural health. Estimates have revealed that \$10 million of a \$15 million program, the Rural Medical Infrastructure fund to provide much needed medical infrastructure in rural communities, will be returned to government, the Shadow Ministers said. Their statement is at <http://www.alp.org.au/media/1106/msrd020.php>

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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 MEDICARE ITEM "A RISK TO RURAL MUMS AND BABIES"

The federal health minister has ignored the advice of the nursing profession by pressing ahead with an item number that potentially puts the health of rural and remote women and their babies at risk, the Australian Nursing Federation has said.

ANF federal secretary Jill Iliffe said there was strong support among the health professions for initiatives to improve access to care for people in rural and remote communities, however the government had failed to take account of safety and quality concerns with the new antenatal Medicare item number 16400.

The full text of the ANF statement is at http://www.anf.org.au/02_anf_news_media/news_press_061102b.html

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RURAL NURSES' ASSOCIATION FOCUSES ON BIRTHING ISSUES IN THE BUSH THROUGH NAME CHANGE

The Association for Australian Rural has been renamed 'Australian Rural Nurses and Midwives (ARNM)'.

ARNM President, Professor Karen Francis said "this inclusion of midwives in the name of the association demonstrates our commitment to birthing services in rural areas, specifically through support for rural midwives to provide quality services for rural consumers".

The maintenance of birthing services in rural and remote areas of Australia is a topical one and one of the major issues for Rural & Remote health service providers.

ARNM will continue to promote quality health care through excellence in rural nursing and midwifery practice by supporting nurses and midwives in the development and delivery of health care services in rural Australia.

Note new website and email addresses:

Website: <http://www.arnm.asn.au>

Email: info@arnm.asn.au

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INDIGENOUS FAMILY VIOLENCE GETS A CLOSER LOOK

Family violence is an issue of national significance in Australia. The importance of this issue in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities has been recognised by community leaders who have encouraged and supported the development of better information in this area. A report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) sheds light on the extent of family violence and its associated harms for Indigenous people in particular.

Report author, Dr Fadwa Al-Yaman, said the report, Family violence among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, is the first to take a comprehensive look at the extent to which existing data can be used to profile Indigenous family violence.

Findings of the report include:

* In 2005, 6% of Australian women and 11% of men reported that they had experienced violence in the last 12 months. Most of those women (78%) and many of those men (34%) were assaulted by someone known to them.

* In 2002, about one in four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15 years and over reported being a victim of physical or threatened violence in the twelve months before the survey (24%) - around twice the rate of non-Indigenous Australians.

* The rate of reported violence among Indigenous Australians was similar in remote and non-remote areas, but the rate of family violence reported as a neighbourhood problem in remote areas was almost three times that in urban areas (41% compared to 14%).

The AIHW statement is at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2006/mr20061101.cfm> and the full publication is at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10372>

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From: Michael Gleeson
Subject: ACRRM 4th Scientific Forum

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.

Details are at <http://www.acrrm.org.au/main.asp?NodeID=19252>

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From: Margaret McJannett
Subject: COSA ASM Update Register Now!

We invite you to join us for a COSA program with a definite difference as we join with the AH&MRC congress in Melbourne from 29 November to 1 December. This year's meeting offers an exciting mix of science and practice through a combination of invited and abstract speakers. The commitment this year has been to offer a program predominantly organised around themes rather than disciplines which we hope will give us maximum time to benefit from COSA's multidisciplinary structure. There is a major focus on breast cancer this year and the breast group has worked hard to provide a program that will have wide appeal, with many of the topics relevant to the care of people with all types of cancers. The international speakers, Nora Kearney, Richard Sainsbury, Judy Garber, Nathan Cherny and Ciaran O'Boyle, will all be presenting at least twice and will be joined by a number of international speakers drawn from the overall AH&MRC program. Three of the main AH&MRC plenary speakers will take a cancer focus (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) and will tailor their presentations to target a combined audience of scientists and clinicians, so take this opportunity to hear about the latest scientific developments in cancer care. While the ASM officially starts on Wednesday, remember that your full registration will allow you to attend the entire program from its start on Sunday evening. The ASM program also contains a number of pre-conference workshops focusing on consumers, cancer nursing education, communication skills and care coordination. Breakfast sessions have all been allocated to the Thursday morning to maximise your ability to enjoy the conference dinner on Thursday night without the expectation of an early rise. The updated program is now available on the COSA website <http://www.cosa.org.au>. Looking forward to seeing you in Melbourne.

Sanchia Aranda
Convenor

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Pacific Region Indigenous Doctors Congress 2006
Roroua Convention Centre, New Zealand, 6-10 December 2006

Information at <http://www.conference.co.nz/pridoc2006>

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From: Relate Human Services
Subject: ACCFPP Conference 2007 - Call for Papers

You are invited to attend the second national conference for the Australian College for Child and Family Protection Practitioners in Melbourne - 19 to 21 May 2007 at the Victoria Hotel, Little Collins Street.

The conference theme "Borders and Bridges" reflects the broad contexts of Australian child and family practice. Diverse state data collection systems and differences in risk and safety assessment supply the foundation of a lack of systematic planning. Workforce roles are similar but skills and qualifications are not truly comparable. Different levels of non-government and government services across the three tiers of government add to the complexity. The ACCFPP aims to build bridges between agencies and professions to minimise the impacts of poverty and mental illness on Australian families and children.

The Conference secretariat is based at the Mackay Offices of Relate Human Services, PO Box 1401, Mackay 4740, Phone 07-49575400 Fax 07-49575488 Email: accfpp@bigpond.net.au <http://www.relatehumanservices.com.au>

On behalf of the organising committee we invite you to submit an abstract for evaluation for presentation at the Conference. Abstracts are due by December 31, 2006. Authors are invited to submit abstracts for oral papers, workshops and posters. The 250 word abstract should outline the aims and content of the presentation and must be submitted electronically. You must also identify your preferred presentation process but may be asked to consider an alternative format by the programme committee. Early bird Registration closes 1 March, 2007

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