

National Rural Health Alliance eforum - 20 April 2010

In this issue:

- * PM urged to 'lock in' single funder for health
- * Population size, rural health and the two-speed economy
- * Major rural health gains not through hospitals
- * 'From Little Things Big Things Grow'
- * Rural Health Education Foundation webcast on chronic disease
- * ACSA Twenty 10 - Call for Presentations
- * ACSA National Community Care Conference - Rural & Remote Delegate Sponsorship
- * CRCAH News
- * NSW Rural Doctors Network Scholarships - applications now open
- * Rural Health on the Web
- * AIHW Reports
- * Federal Government News
- * SARRAH Supports Boost for Health Programs in Rural and Remote Australia
- * Performance audit of residential aged care for Indigenous Australians
- * ABS Releases
- * Rural Health on the ABC
- * RDAA News
- * Articles in 'Rural and Remote Health'
- * What's On
- * Contribution and subscription information and disclaimer
- * Full text of "'From Little Things Big Things Grow'"
- * Full text of "Major rural health gains not through hospitals"
- * Full text of "Population size, rural health and the two-speed economy"
- * Full text of "PM urged to 'lock in' single funder for health"

+++++

PM URGED TO 'LOCK IN' SINGLE FUNDER FOR HEALTH

People in rural, regional and remote areas are likely to be much more confident in their support of health reform if the Prime Minister can confirm that his current proposals are steps towards a single funder for the Australian health system.

The full text of the Alliance statement is at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/mediareleases/mr-16-04-10.pdf> and is reproduced below.

+++++

POPULATION SIZE, RURAL HEALTH AND THE TWO-SPEED ECONOMY

The National Rural Health Alliance applauds the decision to appoint Tony Burke as Australia's first Minister for Population, and expects his work to be a key part of a national debate about the future of rural and remote communities.

The full text of the Alliance statement is at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/mediareleases/mr-08-04-10.pdf> and is reproduced below.

+++++

MAJOR RURAL HEALTH GAINS NOT THROUGH HOSPITALS

Improving equity in health outcomes across Australia has been identified as the principal cause in the current push for health reform. This is the claim by Gordon Gregory, Executive Director of the National Rural Health Alliance, in the latest issue of the Australian Journal of Rural Health (AJRH). In the same issue of the journal there is an outline of the history of health reform in Australia from 2007 to 2009.

The full text of the Alliance statement is at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/mediareleases/mr-health-gains-06-04-10.pdf> and is reproduced below.

+++++

'FROM LITTLE THINGS BIG THINGS GROW'

The announcement by the Prime Minister of a small amount of additional funding for allied health programs in rural and remote areas will help provide some additional services for people in need - and represents the next step on the long road towards providing equivalent levels of support for all health professions.

The full text of the Alliance statement is at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/mediareleases/mr-06-04-10.pdf> and is reproduced below.

+++++

RURAL HEALTH EDUCATION FOUNDATION WEBCAST ON CHRONIC DISEASE

The Rural Health Education Foundation will be running a webcast on chronic disease amongst Indigenous adults entitled "Sharing Solutions: Indigenous Communities Tackling Chronic Disease". The Foundation would encourage anyone interested to register and participate in the webcast or view the program at a satellite viewing site in your local area.

The program aims to increase the capacity of health professionals to respond more effectively to the health and wellbeing needs of Indigenous adults. It explores successful community-based primary healthcare initiatives that have an emphasis on prevention and health promotion. It also examines community-based strategies that have been successful in ameliorating Indigenous health disadvantage, and in building capacity and resilience. The program emphasises that the gap in life expectancy cannot be closed unless chronic disease issues are addressed in an approach that values autonomy, cultural identity, and community responsibility.

The program showcases particular projects that are making a difference: the Family Wellbeing Program at Yarrabah in Queensland; a diabetes self-management program conducted by the Far North Queensland Rural Division of General Practice; and the Chronic Care Program developed by Dharah Gibinj Aboriginal Medical Service in Casino NSW.

Program details:

Sharing Solutions: Indigenous Communities Tackling Chronic Disease

Tuesday 27th April

8.00pm NSW, ACT, VIC, TAS, QLD; 7.30pm SA and NT; 6pm WA

LIVE simultaneous webcast and satellite broadcast

Featuring an all-Indigenous panel - Daniel Browning, Producer and Presenter of Radio National's Away! program will be chairing a panel of Indigenous experts in this area. The panel includes Dr Alex Brown, Head, Centre for Indigenous Vascular and Diabetes Research for the Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute ; Mrs Sally Goold, Chairperson and Executive Director, Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses, QLD; Ms Leisa McCarthy, Nutritionist & Chronic Conditions Program Leader, Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health; and Dr Mark Wenitong, Senior Medical Officer, Health Council, QLD

For more information about the program and how to register and view the program go to http://www.rhef.com.au/programs/program-1/?program_id=402

+++++

From: Karina Crawford <<mailto:Karina@cdesign.com.au>>
Subject: **ACSA Twenty 10 - Call for Presentations**

We are now calling for presentations for ACSA's annual National Conference. "Explore the possibilities" is this year's theme. We want to explore the possibilities around how we can adapt lessons from our collective experience, and embrace innovative practices from within and outside our industry.

The Conference will be held at the Grand Chancellor Hotel on 's waterfront from Sunday September 19 to Wednesday September 22. The Twenty 10 National Conference is the most important aged and community care event this year and we want you to be part of the action.

Presentations for the concurrent sessions should address the themes of sustainability, IT, food, travel, community, workforce, and the challenges ahead.

In addition to traditional presentations, this year's conference will also include a new concept - an Ideas Market Place. Projects, ideas and innovations suited to PowerPoint presentations displayed on designated screens, will run throughout the Conference. The Ideas Market Place will allow delegates to gather for informal discussions on the presentations displayed. More details, including how to make a submission for the Ideas Market Place, will be provided in the coming weeks.

For concurrent session presentations, we invite you to submit a 200-word summary including how your paper fits within the Conference themes. Please refer to the conference website http://www.cdesign.com.au/acsa2010/zone_presenters.html for more information including the Call for Presentations document.

For any queries contact Conference Design at (03) 6231 2999

+++++

From: Pat Sparrow <PSparrow@agedcare.org.au>
Subject: **ACSA National Community Care Conference - Rural & Remote Delegate Sponsorship**

ACSA is holding a national community care conference on the Gold Coast from 2nd - 4th June this year. We have sponsorship of \$1,000 to assist people from rural and remote areas attend the conference. We have three such places available.

If you are a rural and remote, including indigenous, service provider and would like the opportunity to attend the upcoming National Conference as a sponsored delegate then apply now!

Three Sponsorships of \$1,000 each are available as a contribution towards your airfares, accommodation and attendance at the conference. These places are proudly sponsored by HESTA Super Fund and SmartCare.

To attend as a sponsored delegate simply send an email to <<mailto:events@acqi.org.au>>. by no later than Friday 30 April 2010 and explain in 200 words or less why you would like to attend the conference and what you will do with the knowledge and networks you gain from attending. Please ensure you include your contact and organisation details.

ACSA will be advising all successful applicants by Friday 7 May so travel arrangements can be made in time. If you have any questions please contact Kim Hart at ACQ Conference + Event Management on 07 3725 5588. E-mail applications to <events@acqi.org.au>

+++++

NRHA on TWITTER

From <http://twitter.com/NRHAlliance>

Rural reform qq. inc. relationship LHNs-PCOs, aged care, block funding small hospitals, and impacts of these on workforce distribution

John Dwyer on the absolute need for a single funder of public hospitals: <http://bit.ly/aNRQNu>

The Blueprint for health reform is here: <http://bit.ly/bUJgyM>. Will it pass the tests?

The much-awaited news on Primary Care Orgs. may not register on radar, given vol. of dots on screen; let it not be so! <http://bit.ly/9kXz1G>

Is 30pc of GST more for Victoria than extra 18pc of public hospital costs? Will it always be so? Might the 18 pc grow to 38 or 58??

Fascinating complexity of population policy - Radio National <http://bit.ly/9bkhIN> and NRHA media release <http://bit.ly/ah6ZMJ>

Premier Brumby has apparently proposed a health plan of his own. 11 days until COAG. Any sure bets?

Unprecedented recognition by a PM of what 'allied health' is and does - see transcript:

<http://bit.ly/bsaL0I>

Good to have public debate on pros and cons of population change. But given its complexity, who'd be a politician!

+++++

NRHA on YouTube

(<http://www.youtube.com/user/RuralHealthAlliance>)

Nurse TV: The Country's Voice
Public Seminar 2009

+++++

Highlights of the new section on the Alliance's website where you can keep in touch and provide your comments on e-health developments in rural and remote areas at

(<http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/e-health/?IntCatId=45>)

* The Alliance's position paper on the rural and remote implications of a national e-health strategy - <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/publications/final%20e-health%20position%20paper.pdf>

* Contribute information and views -

* Follow the development of broadband and electronic communications in rural and remote communities - <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/e-health/?IntContId=14851&IntCatId=45>

* Help improve our understanding of progress towards shared individual electronic health records - <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/e-health/?IntContId=14853&IntCatId=45>

+++++

RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH PAPERS 1991 - 2009 DVD

Where can you easily access 3,189 references to the words 'rural health'?

All 3,189 documents can be found on the updated 'Rural and Remote Health Papers 1991-2009' DVD available when you join friends of the Alliance (see

<http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/friends/?IntCatId=4>)

You will also find 2,510 references to 'remote health', 526 references to 'health reform', 1,359 references to 'aboriginal health', and 315 references to 'oral health'.

What will you search for when you get your copy? The DVD contains the proceedings of all ten National Rural Health Conferences, all Alliance policy documents, annual reports, media releases and newsletters.

Don't forget friends of the Alliance also receive a discounted registration for the 11th National Rural Health Conference to be held in Perth, 13-16 March 2011.

+++++

JOIN FRIENDS IN 2010

2010 is shaping up to be another interesting and important year for health in rural and remote areas. We would like to encourage you to join or renew your membership of friends of the

Alliance for another year. The cost of membership is unchanged: \$44 (including GST) for an individual, \$165 for an organisation of less than 50 people, and \$330 for a large organisation.

On joining you will receive a friends membership pack including a certificate, the Rural and Remote Health Papers CD, lapel pin, fact sheets and the latest annual report. A membership form can also be found on the friends page of the Alliance website at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/friends/?IntCatId=4>

The NRHA values the input of friends and finds its advice and contributions invaluable to the work of the Alliance. We look forward to working with you again in 2010.

+++++

CRCAH NEWS

(From <http://www.crcah.org.au/>)

CRCATSIH Bulletin - 12 April 2010

A fortnightly bulletin distributed by the Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (CRCATSIH) through our partners - with information on media, reports, events, job opportunities and new publications.

<http://www.crcah.org.au/downloads/2010-04-12-CRCATSIH-eBulletin.pdf>

Strategic Directions - Social Determinants of Health Report

A report has been produced on a project that explored ways to build capacity in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social determinant research. It was funded by the CRCAH and conducted by the VACCHO Public Health Research Unit.

<http://www.crcah.org.au/publications/downloads/Strategic-Report-for-SDOH-2010.pdf>

Support Systems for Indigenous Primary Health Care Services Project

The Support Systems Project is one of the priority projects that the CRC for Aboriginal Health identified in its Comprehensive Primary Health Care, Health Systems and Workforce program. The project is in its final stages and is expected to be completed in July 2010. For an update on the project, please go to the Support Systems page at

http://www.crcah.org.au/research/support_systems_phc.html

New report: Preventing infants deaths among Aboriginal and teenage women in SA
Researchers have released a report into infant mortality among Aboriginal and teenage women in South Australia.

http://www.adelaide.edu.au/arch/research/indigenous_health/shrp_report.html>

+++++

MARCH EDITION OF PARTYLINE OUT NOW

Partyline 38 is currently being mailed to subscribers and is available on the National Rural Health Alliance website. The new edition was produced in conjunction with the Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute (APHCRI) at the ANU and contains two feature articles from APHCRI. It has a focus on health reform and includes responses to health announcements from both the Prime Minister and the Opposition Leader. Two remote area nurses reflect on the challenges faced by their profession, and some RAMUS scholars report

on their rural placements. There are articles on dental health, regional development, rural GP locum schemes, and an e-health update, as well as information on resources and news on rural health.

To contribute to future editions (article, photo, letter to the editor, poem), contact <partyline@ruralhealth.org.au>. Back copies are available on the Partyline page of the website at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/publications/?IntContId=57&IntCatId=6>

+++++

CLICK TO GIVE FREE MAMMOGRAMS

<http://www.thebreastcancersite.com/clickToGive/home.faces?siteId=2>

+++++

NSW RURAL DOCTORS NETWORK SCHOLARSHIPS - APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

(From <http://www.nrdsn.org.au>)

Applications are now open for the following scholarships from the NSW Rural Doctors Network:

- * Bush Bursary/Country Women's Association Scholarships (Applications close 3 May 2010)
- * NSW Rural Resident Medical Officer Cadetships (Applications close 2 August 2010).

Students must be in their second or later year of their medical degree. For scholarship information, eligibility criteria and application forms, go to the RDN website at <http://www.nswrdn.com.au> and click on 'Students & Scholarships' then 'RDN Scholarships'. For further enquiries, contact Marie Kelliher on 02 8337 8100 or email <students@nswrdn.com.au>

+++++

The Australian Journal of Rural Health is a multidisciplinary journal, which aims to facilitate the formation of interdisciplinary networks to build and advance rural practice for all health professionals. Get published in the Australian Journal of Rural Health! The Journal welcomes short reports and letters to the editor as well as review articles, original research articles and clinical perspectives. For useful tips on submitting your manuscript, read the FREE editorial, How to get published in the Australian Journal of Rural Health.

Manuscripts can be submitted online at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ajrh> Manuscript Central or posted to AJRH. The Australian Journal of Rural Health is published on behalf of the National Rural Health Alliance by Blackwell Publishing Asia Pty Ltd 155 Cremorne Street Richmond Vic. 3121 Tel: +61 (0)3 9274 3100 Fax: +61 (0)3 9274 3101 E-mail: melbourne@johnwiley.com.au

April 2010 issue now available. Contents include:
Editorial - Health reform and the immediate needs of rural and remote communities
Policy Review - A brief history of 'Health reform' in Australia, 2007-2009
Viewpoint - Charting the future course of rural health and remote health in Australia: Why we need theory

Original Articles

From rural beginnings to statewide roll-out: Evaluation of facilitator training for a group-based diabetes prevention program

Urban-rural differences in psychiatric rehabilitation outcomes

Evaluation of a mobile screening service for abdominal aortic aneurysm in Broken Hill, a remote regional centre in far western NSW

Availability of antidotes for the treatment of acute poisoning in Queensland public hospitals

Short Reports

Rural Birth Index for Australia?

Medical students out of town but not out of touch: Use of personal digital assistants to improve access to clinical information and enhance learning at the point of care in rural and remote Australia

Factors to consider when starting up a videoconference medical oncology outreach clinic

Further information at <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/loi/ajr>

+++++

RURAL HEALTH ON THE WEB

(From <http://www.gigaalert.com/>)

Rural Health Institute for Clinical and Translational Science

The Rural Health Institute pursues this mission through the combined strength of scientific knowledge, community involvement and informed public policy.

<http://irhr.ua.edu/>

ruralhealth.com: The Leading Health Care Site on the Net

<http://www.ruralhealth.com/>>

Rural Health Center

This is a one-stop resource for Rural Health providers.

<http://www.cms.gov/center/rural.asp>

+++++

AIHW REPORTS

Men in regional and rural areas at greater health risk

Men living in rural Australia are more likely to experience chronic health conditions than their urban counterparts, according to a report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) "A snapshot of men's health in regional and remote Australia". The report shows that male death rates increased with remoteness; cardiovascular diseases were responsible for nearly a third of the elevated male death rates outside major cities; and compared with major cities, death rates from diabetes were 1.3 as high for men in inner regional areas and 3.7 as high in very remote areas.

Media statement at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2010/mr20100414.cfm>

Full publication at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10742>

New data collection guidelines for Indigenous status

All Australians should soon become accustomed to being asked 'Are you of Aboriginal or

Torres Strait Islander origin?' when they visit a health service, following the release of new Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data collection guidelines.
Media statement at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2010/mr20100408.cfm>
Full publication at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/11052>

Cardiovascular deaths fall, especially among older Australians
Death rates from cardiovascular disease (CVD) have fallen since 1987, with the greatest declines being among older people, according to a report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, "Cardiovascular disease mortality: trends at different ages".
Media release at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2010/mr20100416.cfm>
Full publication at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10811>

+++++

LIFELINE INFORMATION SERVICE - 1300 13 11 14

Your Rural Mental Health Information Service Lifeline's Information Service 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.lifeline.org.au/infoservice> and further information is available at <mailto:infoservice@lifeline.org.au> and <http://www.lifeline.org.au>

+++++

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT NEWS

Regional Cancer Centres
The Rudd Government will invest \$560 million in new or upgraded cancer centres in regional and rural communities across Australia.
General: <http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6621>
Bundaberg: <http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6640>
Cairns: <http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6618>
Rockhampton: <http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6629>
Townsville: <http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6620>
Toowoomba: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-je-je023.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=4>
WA: http://www.minister.infrastructure.gov.au/gg/releases/2010/april/gg030_2010.htm
Victoria: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-nr-nr059.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=4>
Ballarat: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-nr-nr060.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=4>
Tamworth: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-ws-ws023.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=4>
NSW Central Coast: <http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6670>

Clinical Training Places

The Australian Government is providing up to \$22 million to support additional clinical training places for students at local universities - which will encourage more health students to study and work across Queensland. The Rudd Government is building a health workforce to meet the needs of all Australians, now and into the future.

<http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6641>

Mackay: <http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6623>

Gladstone: <http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6639>

NSW: <http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6674>

WA: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-mb-mb024.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=4>

Hospital Emergency Departments

The Rudd Government will set a new National Four Hour Target for emergency department access in public hospitals under its new National Health and Hospitals Network.

<http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6643>

The Territory's First Medical School Gets Underway

The Minister for Indigenous Health and Rural and Regional Health, Warren Snowdon, joined the Member for Solomon, Damian Hale and Chief Minister Paul Henderson, in Darwin to 'turn the first sod' for the Northern Territory's new medical school. The Rudd Government will also contribute a further \$4.4 million over four years from 2010-11 towards the operational costs for the establishment of the Flinders University Northern Territory Medical Program, to be provided through the broader National Partnership Agreement with the NT Government.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-ws-ws025.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=4>

Allied Health Clinical Placements

The Rudd Government will double scholarships for allied health clinical placements in rural areas and establish a locum scheme to support 1,000 allied health workers over the next decade. Currently, there aren't enough allied health professionals in rural and remote areas.

<http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6615>

Report Helps Shape First National Male Health Policy

The stereotype of the indestructible Aussie male has been challenged in a new report that reveals men living outside major cities have worse health outcomes than men in urban areas. Indigenous Health and Rural and Regional Health Minister, Warren Snowdon, launched A Snapshot of Men's Health in Regional and Remote Australia, at a meeting with men's health organisation, Andrology Australia. To address these and a number of other health challenges facing males in Australia, the Rudd Government made an election commitment in 2007 to develop the nation's first National Male Health Policy.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-ws-ws027.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=4>

Indigenous Health Project Officers Placed In General Practices Across Australia

The Rudd Government has allocated more than 80 Indigenous Health Project Officers to general practices across the nation to help close the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Minister for Indigenous Health and Rural and Regional Health, Warren Snowdon, made the announcement at an Australian General Practice Network workshop in Melbourne, which brought together Indigenous Health Project Officers for the first time. The role of Indigenous Health Project Officers is to: Take a leadership role in general practices to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to make greater use of mainstream primary care.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-ws-ws028.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=4>

Building an Australian Aged Care System: Commonwealth to Take Complete Responsibility for Aged Care

As part of the Rudd Government's \$739 million investment in aged care to better support older Australians, for the first time the Commonwealth will take full policy and funding responsibility for aged care. This will allow the Government to build a nationally consistent aged care system allowing people to seamlessly move from basic help at home through to residential care as their care needs change, assisted through improvements to aged care information and assessment services.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-je-je027.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=4>

Strengthening Primary Care in Local Communities

Patients will receive better health care in the community after primary health care organisations (PHCOs) are established across Australia. Primary health care organisations will. The first primary health care organisations will be established by mid 2011.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-nr-nr064.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=4>

Investing in Sight-Saving Eye Care in the NT and WA

Indigenous communities of Central Australia will receive more sight-restoring surgery in a week-long blitz at the Alice Springs Hospital.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-ws-ws024.htm>

+++++

SARRAH SUPPORTS BOOST FOR HEALTH PROGRAMS IN RURAL AND REMOTE AUSTRALIA

The Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health (SARRAH) who represent Allied Health Professionals across rural and remote Australia warmly welcomes the announcement by the Australian Government of an increase in Clinical Placement Scholarships for Allied Health Professionals.

<http://www.aushealthcare.com.au/documents/news/16801/100407%20The%20Services%20of%20Australian%20Rural%20and%20Remote%20Allied%20Health.pdf>

+++++

PERFORMANCE AUDIT OF RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FOR INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

This report highlights the objectives, findings and recommendations of the assessment by the Office of Evaluation and Audit (Indigenous programs) of residential aged care services provided to older Indigenous Australians under the Australian government's flexible and mainstream programs. The audit found that the flexible program had the ability to adapt to the varied needs of elderly Indigenous people, but that documentation on the operations of the program, provision of guidelines and ongoing assessment since its inception were limited. The mainstream program was considered intrusive by some people during the assessment

stage for aged care eligibility, even though the accreditation standards for aged care facilities do have culturally sensitive provisions. The mainstream program acknowledged the age difference for older Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (over 50 for Indigenous, compared to over 70 for non-Indigenous) but this was not planned for in funding arrangements for aged care placements for Indigenous people aged 50-69 years of age. The recommendations from the audit centred around the findings of the evaluation.

http://www.anao.gov.au/download.cfm?item_id=2A702EBD1560A6E8AA792DBA83FA1FC9&binary_id=2A6C55F01560A6E8AAB5C557C224ABB6

+++++

AUSTRALIAN ORGAN DONOR REGISTER ONLINE

The Australian Organ Donor Register is Australia's only national organ and tissue donor register and serves as a lifeline to the people on the organ transplant waiting lists. Register online at <http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/public/services/aodr/register.jsp> to be an Australian Organ Donor now!

+++++

ABS RELEASES

Perinatal Deaths, Australia, 2008 (Cat 3304.0)

In 2008, there were 2,501 perinatal deaths registered in Australia, compared with 2,532 registered in 2007, a decrease of 1.2%. In the 10 year period from 1999 to 2008, the lowest perinatal death rate was recorded in 2008 (8.4 deaths per 1,000 total births).

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3304.0?OpenDocument>

+++++

BUSH SUPPORT SERVICES (formerly Bush Crisis Line) - 1800 805 391

The Bush Support Services Line is a 24 hour confidential telephone support service for workers, and their families, who work in health related services in remote and isolated situations. 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.bss.crana.org.au>

+++++

RURAL HEALTH ON THE ABC

(See <http://www.abc.net.au/health/healthyliving/yourhealth/ruralregionalhealth/>)

Foundation best placed to offer eye clinic: Snowdon

The Federal Government has defended a decision to rely on a charity to provide millions of dollars to set up an eye health clinic in Alice Springs.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/04/08/2867536.htm>

Call goes out for more rural health leaders

Medical and nursing students will gather in Wollongong over the next three days to learn how they can help provide leadership roles in rural health services.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/04/08/2867350.htm>

Cancer funding to provide new treatment centre

Rural doctors are welcoming funding for a chemotherapy building in Queensland's north-west, but say travel costs for patients also need to be considered.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/04/08/2867557.htm>

GOVT DELIVERS ON LAST YEARS PROMISE FOR REGIONAL CANCER

CENTRES (PM: 07/04/2010)

<http://abcmail.net.au/t/948505/614869/16832/0/>

Experts focus on Indigenous health

Chronic diseases in Indigenous communities will be analysed over the next few months in two Rural Health Education Foundation (RHEF) initiatives.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/04/07/2865896.htm>

Diabetes funding 'long overdue'

The Close the Gap campaign for Indigenous health equality has welcomed the Rudd Government's \$436 million diabetes package. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare says Indigenous people are three times more likely to acquire diabetes than the rest of the population. Campaign co-chairman Tom Calma says there have been other initiatives for Indigenous health in the past, but it is about time something was done about chronic disease including diabetes.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/04/07/2866065.htm>

Funds boost for allied health services

The Federal Government has announced funding to improve allied health services in far north Queensland. The Government will provide funding for 100 additional placements each year to help train allied health students in rural Australia.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/04/07/2865891.htm>

Another boost to rural health training

The Federal Government says it will boost the number of allied health workers, including physiotherapists, dieticians, and optometrists, in rural and remote areas of Australia.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/201004/s2866068.htm>

Could take decade to train Indigenous doctors

The universities behind the Northern Territory's first medical school are hoping many of its first graduates will be Indigenous and at least half will work in remote Australia.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/04/09/2868738.htm>

Drug trial

The Menzies School of Health Research is hoping the drug Ivermectin will rid the Echo Island community, east of Darwin, of scabies and the strongyloides worm.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/video/2010/03/26/2857705.htm?site=darwin>

Rudd announces health funding in central Queensland

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd says the future of health is a system that is funded nationally but run locally.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/04/09/2868767.htm>

Doctors back PM's rural hospital pledge

Rural Doctors say the Prime Minister has finally shown he's prepared to properly fund country hospitals.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/telegraph/content/2010/s2854785.htm>

A new approach needed for rural health

Health messages just don't make it through to the bush. That's according to Ann Wakatama, who's the General Manager for Health Services at the Royal Flying Doctor Service in Broken Hill.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/sa/content/2010/04/s2873966.htm>

Rural health time bomb

It is estimated that twenty six per cent of rural and remote GPs will retire within the next five years.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/telegraph/content/2010/s2873659.htm>

FUNDING HURDLES FOR INDIGENOUS DRUG PROGRAMS (PM: 13/04/2010)

<http://abcmail.net.au/t/956422/614869/17019/0/>

The further men live from the cities, the sicker they are

Men living in rural and remote areas are more likely to die from diabetes, some cancers, and poisoning than those in major cities. A report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare says rural men are also more likely to experience chronic health problems.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/201004/s2872310.htm>

Guestroom - Mick Gooda

<http://www.abc.net.au/local/audio/2010/04/12/2870116.htm>

Targeting aspiring indigenous doctors

It's hoped that a new medical school at Charles Darwin University will boost the number of Indigenous graduates. There are currently only two Aboriginal doctors from the Northern Territory, both of whom trained interstate.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/nt/content/201004/s2870541.htm>

+++++

RDAA NEWS

Poor health of rural men underlines urgent need for "significant investment" in rural healthcare

14 April 2010

http://www.rdaa.com.au/uploaded_documents/AIHW%20report%20on%20health%20of%20rural%20men%20--%20April%202010.pdf

Rural doctors urge Minister: prove that capitation leads to healthier outcomes for diabetic patients

1 April 2010

http://www.rdaa.com.au/uploaded_documents/Capitation%20plan%20--%20April%202010.pdf

+++++

Get Regional is the new information and referral service for people living and working throughout country Australia. Engaging and interacting rural, regional and remote communities, via dynamic interactive technologies, to ensure a more sustainable future for the bush. The most up-to-date and independent information service with a wide range of broadcast distribution services.

<http://getregional.com.au>

+++++

ARTICLES IN 'RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH'

'Transfer of learning to the nursing clinical practice setting'
"...This is the way we do it in the real world." The transition from theoretical setting to clinical practice site can be an anxious time for student nurses. When there is a difference between what was taught and what is practised, do students fall into the theory-practice gap? This interesting article explores a crucial issue.

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=1313>

"Mind you, there's no anaesthetist on the road': women's experiences of labouring en route'
Women in over 130 small Australian rural communities can no longer deliver their baby in their home town. Instead they face the hazards of many hours road travel to their planned birthing centre while in labour. This qualitative study shows the profound impact of this change on many.

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=1371>

+++++

CURRENT ISSUE OF eMJA

(Available at <http://www.mja.com.au/>)

Super size me: is a big Australia good for our health? - 12 April 2010

Current issue: 5 April 2010

From the Editor's Desk: Defining disorders of the mind

Editorials

Swine flu - lessons learnt in Australia

Managing residual risk in patients receiving statin therapy

Generic medicines literacy - minimising the potential for patient confusion

Research

Generic substitution of commonly used medications: Australia-wide experience, 2007-2008

Anti-tumour necrosis factor-? treatment for perianal Crohn's disease in Australia

Examining the knowledge of and attitudes to pandemic influenza among general practice staff

Depression and obesity in adults with asthma: multiple comorbidities and management issues

Outcomes of establishing an acute assessment unit in the general medical service of a tertiary teaching hospital

Research Enterprise - Improving communication when seeking informed consent: a randomised controlled study of a computer-based method for providing information to

prospective clinical trial participants
For Debate - It's time to depolarise the unhelpful PSA-testing debate and put into practice lessons from the two major international screening trials
Viewpoint
Wanted: politicians to champion health (not obesity)
Prevention before profits: a levy on food and alcohol advertising
Clinical Update - Home haemodialysis in Australia - is the wheel turning full circle?
New Drugs, Old Drugs - Dabigatran etexilate: a new thrombin inhibitor
Lessons from Practice - Progressive meningoencephalitis in a Sudanese immigrant
Diagnostic Dilemma - Late-stage human African trypanosomiasis in a Sudanese refugee
Letters
High rates of amputation among Indigenous people in Western Australia
Surgery for stress urinary incontinence in Australia: current trends from Medicare data
Is informed consent necessary for computed tomography in children and young adults?
As mass media evolves into "masses of media", what are the implications for our health?
Book Review - A real man's tool box. A DIY health manual for men

+++++

SUSTAINING RURAL COMMUNITIES

Social research for rural communities and all its industries. Lets plan and act for our future.

Date: April 19 - 21st, 2010

Venue: The Crossing Theatre, Narrabri (800 delegates)

Format: Morning sessions - presentations. Afternoon sessions - engagement, workshops, planning and networks

Registration: Essential. Details available on request

Cost: No entry cost

Conference Streams

1. 19th April - The Research (social research concerning rural communities and economies, impacts of climate change, drought, water reforms, resources boom and global food / fibre security)
2. 20th April - The Workforces (responses to creating and sustaining regionally flexible workforces with resilient communities)
3. 21st April - The Capacity (the Culture of Learning, building the capacity of rural people and their communities)

For more information: Please contact Kate Schwager on 02 6799 2477

<http://www.cottoncrc.org.au>

+++++

EFFECTIVE ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SERVICE DELIVERY 2010

Beyond Consultation to Shared Responsibility

20-21 April 2010

Crowne Plaze, Alice Springs, NT

Despite the best of intentions, for centuries governments have struggled to deliver services that are in-line with traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lifestyles. Facilitating Indigenous mobility practices and the rich cultural traditions of diverse clans has emphasised the need to move away from a one-size fits all model, to empowerment of individual communities in driving their own service delivery. When you attend this conference you will take away:

- * Increased awareness on cultural norms and protocols for effective service delivery
- * Tools on negotiating with government, the private sector and communities
- * Methods on how to have ongoing input during implementation of services
- * Case studies on service delivery initiatives that break through common barriers

Criterion is delighted to offer a select number of scholarships for indigenous community representatives to attend.

The conference brochure is now available to download at <http://www.thewebconsole.com/process/link.php?IId=698932&cId=1156791>

For more information regarding this conference, please call 1300 316 882 or visit <http://www.indigservicedelivery.com>

+++++

TOWARDS SOCIAL INCLUSION

A practitioner's guide to building a more inclusive Australia
20-21 April 2010
National Convention Centre
Canberra

In launching the statement, A Stronger, Fairer Australia, the Minister for Social Inclusion, Julia Gillard, said the provision of opportunities, resources, capabilities and responsibilities would ensure that no Australian is left behind. The social inclusion statement set out a new approach to break down the barriers preventing disadvantaged Australians from getting a 'fair go'. Ms Gillard said the principle of social inclusion had underpinned a number of recent reforms, including early childhood education and schools, social housing, the pension system and Indigenous affairs.

Ongoing conversations about social inclusion are critical to ensuring we achieve it. Don't miss out on the opportunity to become involved in this important conversation!

Attend and you will take away:

- * A greater understanding of Australia's social inclusion agenda
- * Strategies for weaving a social inclusion focus into policies and programs going forward
- * A greater understanding of other sectors with whom it is important to collaborate
- * Practical advice on how to focus your organisations work to build a more socially inclusive Australia

Towards Social Inclusion speakers include:

- * Dr John Falzon, St Vincent de Paul Society, National Council of Australia
- * Kerry Graham, Chief Executive Officer, The Inspire Foundation
- * Damian Ferrie, Executive Director, Community Programs, Department of Planning and

Community Development, VIC

* Desley Hargreaves, National Manager, Social Work Services, Centrelink

How to register:

Don't forget to register before 12 February and you can save up to \$600

Online: go to <http://www.thewebconsole.com/process/link.php?Id=718824&cId=1156791>

Tel: 1300 316 882 | Fax: 1300 918 334

+++++

A Realist Approach to Evaluating Health Promotion Interventions:

2 day workshop

The South Australian Community Health Research Unit is delighted to host a 2 day workshop by Professor Louise Potvin.

WHEN: Thursday, 22 April 2010 and Friday, 23 April 2010

WHERE: Thursday, 9:30am - 5:00pm & Friday, 9:00am - 4:00pm

<http://www.aboriginalhealth.flinders.edu.au/Newsletters/2010/Downloads/SACHRU%20Workshop%2022-23%20April%202010.pdf>

+++++

Beyond Evidence on Reducing Health Inequities Symposium:

What works, why and how

27 - 28 April 2010

Adelaide

This will be the final policy event for the NHMRC-funded Australian Health Inequities Program. The aims of the Symposium are to present research-based examples of policies and programs that were designed to intervene on the social determinants of health inequities; to contribute to debates about the ways in which policy makers can build social determinants of health inequities perspectives into programs inside and outside of government; to compare progress in the uptake of social determinants of health inequities perspectives in Australia and other countries; and to consider how social determinants of health can contribute to the goal of Closing the Gap. Confirmed international speakers include Professor Sir Michael G. Marmot.

Symposium website: <http://som.flinders.edu.au/FUSA/PublicHealth/AHIP/2010/>

+++++

Healthy Development Adelaide:

Indigenous Women's & Children's Health what are we doing to close the gap?

WHEN: Thursday 29 April 2010. 4.30pm - 7.00pm.

WHERE: State Library of South Australia Institute Building Lecture Theatre (corner of Kintore Ave and North Tce, Adelaide)

<http://www.aboriginalhealth.flinders.edu.au/Newsletters/2010/Downloads/HDA%20Event%20Indigenous%20Womens%20&%20Childrens%20Health.pdf>

+++++

BUILDING THE AGENDA: THE FIRST NATIONAL FORUM ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN PRIMARY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

May 2010 will see an important national Forum on Safety and Quality in Primary and Community Health. The Forum, to be held in Sydney, will bring together practitioners, consumers, administrators, researchers and academics across the spectrum of community based health care.

It will be the first gathering in Australia concerning health service safety and quality, targeted to multi-disciplinary primary care including indigenous health, general medical practitioners, mental health, drug and alcohol, health promotion, aged care, as well as rural and remote health services.

Auspiced by the National Primary and Community Health Network, the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, NSW Health and the Quality Improvement Council, the forum will be held on 10 May 2010.

The Forum will be an opportunity to exchange information and to explore the quality implications of the federal government's health reforms. Well known media personality and facilitator Julie McCrossin has been booked to ensure the event is interactive.

Find out more about the Forum, including program and registration details at <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/aipc/pchnetwork/national.htm>

For further information please contact Jenny Macmillan, Australian Primary and Community Health Network (03) 9479 1772 j.macmillan@latrobe.edu.au

+++++

Lunch Time Talk: 'Indigenous Minds': A paradigm for Primary Health Care Research by John Binda Reid

WHEN: Monday 10 May 2010

WHERE: Flinders University

Talk commences 12.30pm by John Binda Reid Indigenous: Research Fellow (Centre for Remote Health - PHCRED).

John is a member of the Kokatha nation (located in Northern SA). He presented at last year's Tri State Conference in Alice Springs and was very well received, he is an RDP fellow with the PHCRED program in Alice Springs. <http://www.crh.org.au/content/view/195/35/>

His paper examines a philosophical approach to theory of knowledge approaches to Indigenous health. John will be visiting Flinders from 10 - 13 May, 2010 I hope that you can attend.

Please RSVP to raelene.burnley@flinders.edu.au to assist with catering for lunch

+++++

2nd Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium

The Alliance is one of four organisations auspicing the 2nd Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium to be held in Brisbane, 9-11 June 2010. Further information:

<http://rrhss.ruralhealth.org.au/>

+++++

Inaugural National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Conference (NIDAC 2010): Listening, Learning and Leading.

16 - 18 June 2010

Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide, South Australia

The National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Conference aims to assist and contribute to further develop the capacity of those working to address the harms associated with the use of alcohol and other drugs in meaningful and practical ways. The Conference will also showcase and celebrate the quiet efforts and achievements of those striving to improve the health and well being of our communities. It is a time for listening, learning and leading the way on what can be accomplished on this important health and social issue within Australia.

To view flyer and details go to <http://www.nidaconference.com.au/>

+++++

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE RESEARCH AND HEALTH REFORM: IMPROVING CARE CONFERENCE

Wednesday 30 June 2010 - Friday 2 July 2010

Darwin, Northern Territory

Come to Darwin for the 2010 PHC Research Conference - Primary health care research and health reform: Improving care, and participate in one of the premier primary health care networking events.

This conference is a must for anyone with an interest in primary health care research, evaluation and development. It will provide essential opportunities for researchers, decision makers, practitioners and consumers to share ideas, debate critical PHC matters, form collaborations and network with speakers and other delegates.

The program is an exciting blend of plenary sessions, workshops, symposia, poster and paper sessions, and influential presenters from both Australia and overseas. Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, it is supported by both the Australian Association of Academic Primary Care (AAAPC) and the Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute (APHCRI, based at ANU).

Earlybird registration is available until Friday 14 May

Call for abstracts closes Friday 19 March

Presented by PHCRIS

Event website: <http://www.phcris.org.au/conference/2010>

+++++

NAIDOC WEEK

4-11 July 2010

<http://www.naidoc.org.au/index.aspx>

+++++

2010 Secretariat for National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) Conference

Alice Springs, 27-29 July

<http://www.snaicc.asn.au/policy/conference>

+++++

Assistive Technology: The tip of the iceberg

Australian Rehabilitation & Assistive Technology Association National Conference

Tuesday 10 - Friday 13 August 2010, Hobart, TAS

On behalf of the conference organising committee, it is our pleasure to invite you to the 2010 ARATA National Conference, AT: The tip of the iceberg, to be held in Hobart, Tasmania, from Tuesday 10- Friday 13 August 2010. With the conference being held in Hobart, Tasmania, the home of the ice breakers heading to the Antarctic, papers will similarly crack through the surface to look more deeply at what lies beneath, explore new frontiers and meet the challenges of the pitfalls and crevasses. There will be an emphasis on thinking beyond the prescription of equipment to look more deeply at the issues of funding, training and support for users and their support personnel, and helping consumers to have the endurance to persevere with their equipment, despite the obstacles. Like the Antarctic explorers, there will be a focus on research and discovery - showcasing new products and ensuring ease in the use of equipment by capitalising on universal design and mainstream products. 'ARATAS 2010' will be full of new territory to explore, with the promise of many adventures to come in the field of Assistive Technology.

Karen Frost & Christopher Bryg

Convenors, ARATAS 2010

For information about ARATA, and the 2010 conference, visit the website at <http://www.e-bility.com/arata/conf.php>

+++++

9th World Indigenous Women and Wellness Conference

Hosted by the Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation

22-25 August 2010

Darwin

The corporation welcomes all people who are interested in, or concerned with, Indigenous women and wellness to get involved in the conference and particularly encourages the participation of Indigenous women. More information from Jodie Farrow, Community Health Engagement/Health Promotions Officer, Danila Dilba Health Service, email jodie.farrow@daniladilba.org.au, T: 08 89435100, F: 08 89435101, W:

<http://www.daniladilba.org.au>

+++++

Healing Our Spirit 2010

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers and researchers are advised to start planning now for Healing Our Spirit Worldwide The Sixth Gathering, which is due to take place on the island of Honolulu in Hawaii from 3 to 10 September 2010. The goal of Healing Our Spirit Worldwide (HOSW) is to celebrate the diverse and unique cultural strengths, knowledge and talents of Indigenous peoples around the world, with a particular focus on successes, best practices and common issues in health, healing and addictions.

The Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health is a proud supporter of and committed participant in the gathering, which will be hosted by native Hawaiian healthcare organisation Papa Ola Lōkahi (<http://www.papaolalokahi.org>).

For more information:
Maria Halkitis - Contract Manager, 08 8943 5020
Mick Gooda - CEO, 0409 688 403

+++++

14th Chronic Diseases Network (CDN) Conference - 'Health Literacy: Opening doors to health and wellbeing'

Darwin, 9-10 September

The 2010 CDN conference will focus on the role and impact of health literacy on the prevention and management of chronic conditions and its importance in achieving positive health outcomes. More information from CDN, T: (08) 8922 8280, E:

[<chronicdiseasesnetwork@nt.gov.au>](mailto:chronicdiseasesnetwork@nt.gov.au)

+++++

Creating Futures 2010 - Harnessing creativity and social enterprise for mental health and wellbeing

Cairns, Far North Queensland

20~24 September, 2010

Announcement and Call For Abstracts

Closing date for receipt of abstracts: Thursday 1 April, 2010

Creating Futures 2010, auspiced by the Centre for Rural & Remote Mental Health Queensland, is the fourth conference in a series in which the populations of interest are indigenous peoples from Australia, New Zealand, North America and the Pacific Islands and people living and working in rural and remote areas.

As with the previous Creating Futures conferences, there will be a focus on the social determinants of health. Creating Futures 2010 will also highlight creativity and social entrepreneurial approaches, posing the question: How is it possible to harness the creativity and energy of the social enterprise sector to address the underpinning social determinants of mental health and wellbeing in the populations of interest?

A National Workshop about Me and My Community, a Centre for Rural & Remote Mental Health Queensland project aimed at developing leadership capacity and mental health and wellbeing knowledge among young people and women working in the farming sector in rural and remote Australia, will be held on Friday, 24 September. This will follow a dedicated

stream of presentations addressing the impact of environmental and other challenges impacting on rural and remote communities on 23 September.

For more information visit the website at <http://www.crrmhq.com.au>

Invitation to attend

Creating Futures convenor, Professor Ernest Hunter, and the Centre for Rural & Remote Mental Health Queensland cordially invite you to attend this exciting, inspiring event that will develop your professional practice and challenge your thinking about mental health and wellbeing in the 21st century.

If you wish to be included in the mailing list to receive the advance program and registration brochure, please email your postal address with "Creating Futures" in the subject line to info@conorg.com.au

Please email abstracts to: info@conorg.com.au

Or post on a CD to: Creating Futures Conference
c/- The Conference Organiser
146 Leicester Street
Carlton, Victoria 3053, Australia

For further details regarding the meeting, please contact:

The Conference Organiser Pty Ltd
146 Leicester Street
Carlton, Victoria, AUSTRALIA 3053
Phone: Australia: (03) 9349 2220
Email: info@conorg.com.au
Fax: Australia: (03) 9349 2230

<http://www.conorg.com.au>

+++++

RURAL MEDICINE AUSTRALIA 2010
Scientific forum and conference

Rural Medicine Australia 2010, the national conference of ACRRM and the Rural Doctors Association of Australia, will this year include a scientific forum. The theme for this important gathering of doctors and others passionate about rural and remote medicine is 'Bringing it all together'. The venue is Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart. RMA 2010 will run from 22 to 24 October. Almost 300 people attended Rural Medicine Australia 2009 in Melbourne. We will shortly be calling for abstracts and launching the RMA 2010 website with registration and accommodation information.

<http://www.acrrm.org.au/news/rural-medicine-australia-2010-0>

+++++

Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs (APSAD)

2010 Conference, in Canberra, on 28 November-1 December. Under the theme, Building on the Capital, the conference will feature international and national speakers with a focus on new treatment, prevention and policy in the areas of drug and alcohol research. Symposia and

abstracts that address all aspects of licit and illicit drug use/misuse are invited. For more information, <http://www.apsadconference.com.au/> or apsad@wsm.com.au

+++++

The 11th National Rural Health Conference will be held in Perth on 13-16 March 2011.

+++++

CONTRIBUTION AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION AND DISCLAIMER

The NRHA e-forum is published fortnightly. 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). Contributions received by the Friday of publication will be included in the e-forum.

The NRHA e-forum is edited by a third party moderator, Jim Groves. 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 views of Jim Groves or any organisation he is associated with. Jim Groves can be contacted at grovesc@winshop.com.au

Please forward a copy to any colleague you think may be interested.

+++++

Media Release

6 April 2010

'From Little Things Big Things Grow'

Today's announcement by the Prime Minister of a small amount of additional funding for allied health programs in rural and remote areas will help provide some additional services for people in need - and represents the next step on the long road towards providing equivalent levels of support for all health professions.

Dr Jenny May, Chair of the Alliance, said the involvement of the Commonwealth Government in programs for nursing and allied health, beginning some years ago, was an important part of what is required is to build multidisciplinary health care teams in country communities.

"Allied health professions have often been forgotten partners where the establishment of staff positions and the provision of professional support have been concerned," Dr May said.

"Physiotherapists, psychologists, speech pathologists and radiographers - as well as practitioners in the other professions deemed as 'allied health' - have important roles to play in the prevention and management of illness, and in the rehabilitation needed to get people back into the workforce or to stay independently at home rather than moving to a hospital or aged care facility."

"People in rural and remote areas support the current moves to a better health system and desperately hope they will transform their access to all health services and professionals, not just hospitals," the editorial says.

The AJRH is available online at <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/118489045/home?CRETRY=1&SRETRY=0>

+++++

Media Release
8 April 2010
Population size, rural health and the two-speed economy

The National Rural Health Alliance applauds the decision to appoint Tony Burke as Australia's first Minister for Population, and expects his work to be a key part of a national debate about the future of rural and remote communities.

Australia needs an explicit national vision for rural and remote areas and a plan for how it's going to get there. The vision and the plan will recognise the major contributions that rural and remote regions will continue to make to the nation, and the relationship between people's location and wellbeing.

In the light of these major national issues it has been encouraging to hear Minister Burke's observations that population growth impacts differently on various parts of Australia.

The future of many rural communities will be determined by the extent to which governments intervene in the markets, such as through strengthening remote zone tax allowances as suggested by the National Farmers Federation.

If Australia is serious about addressing the issue of how locality affects an individual's health and lifetime opportunities, comprehensive health and social policies must address the economic and other determinants of wellbeing.

The so-called 'two speed economy' means that, while a number of rural and remote regions are experiencing rapid growth due to high levels of activity in the resources sector, many inland agricultural regions are experiencing a gradual loss of population and services.

Another key factor for the Alliance is that people living in rural and remote areas are subject to high levels of economic, environmental and political uncertainty.

Governments need to watch closely the impacts on health of population decline and the loss of services, while continuing to invest in programs that support community development and communities in transition. Growth that is too rapid can also have adverse effects on families and communities.

The Alliance welcomes the growing public debate about the pros and cons of increased population size in Australia. It will help lay the basis for agreed and explicit planning for what rural, regional and remote Australia will look like in the years to come.

+++++

Media Release

16 April 2010

PM urged to 'lock in' single funder for health

People in rural, regional and remote areas are likely to be much more confident in their support of health reform if the Prime Minister can confirm that his current proposals are steps towards a single funder for the Australian health system.

Dr Jenny May, Chair of the 29-member National Rural Health Alliance, said rural people support reform that will improve both access to services in the bush and the distribution of health professionals.

"A clear indication that what's happening now will lead eventually to a single funder and thus to a more integrated system will provide greater confidence about the seriousness and coherence of the reforms intended," Dr May said.

People in rural and remote areas need to be sure that the new system will strike the right balance between local hospitals, aged care, comprehensive primary care and illness prevention.

"The important thing in rural and remote areas is an integrated health care system - not just more hospital beds," Dr May said. "The ratio of hospital beds to population is a notoriously poor indicator of a health system. For various reasons there are more beds in very remote areas than in the major cities but this certainly does not lead to better health outcomes or services in very remote areas - quite the contrary."

The Alliance is seeking clarification about how the local health networks and the new primary care organisations, yet to be established, will relate to each other.

"Like many others, rural people want to be sure there will be more services on the ground and more health professionals of all kinds," Dr May said.

"We want governments to ensure that the changes discussed at next Monday's meeting of COAG will improve health service access, equity and integration for people in rural and remote areas. If this is the case the reform should be implemented as soon as possible. Australia's governments should not allow this opportunity for positive change to pass them by," said Dr May.
