

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum 22 March 2010

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GOVERNMENT URGED TO ENSURE GPs AND SPECIALISTS WILL HEAD FOR THE BUSH

The Chair of the National Rural Health Alliance, Dr Jenny May, has called on the Government to ensure that "a fair proportion" of the extra GPs and specialists promised this week will spend some or all of their time practising in areas where shortages of health professionals are most severe. The full text of the Alliance statement is at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/mediareleases/mr%20getting%20doctors%20to%20go%20rural%2018%20mar.pdf> and is reproduced below.

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NATIONAL CLOSE THE GAP DAY 2010: 25 MARCH

Campaigning for Indigenous health equality - Let's get it right! Get involved and join the thousands of people around Australia holding events to raise awareness of the Indigenous health crisis.

<http://www.oxfam.org.au/act/events/close-the-gap-day>

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BOOST IN DOCTOR NUMBERS WILL BE WELCOME

The Prime Minister's announcement of major new investments to boost the number of medical graduates who choose to train as GPs or other specialists will be welcomed by people in rural and remote areas. The full text of the Alliance's statement is at

<http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/mediareleases/mr%20boost%20in%20docter%20numpers%20will%20be%20welcome.pdf> and is reproduced below.

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GENERAL PRACTITIONER ANAESTHETIST LOCUM SCHEME (GPALS)

GPALS is a Locum Scheme especially for GP Anaesthetists throughout rural/remote Australia. Funded by the Australian Government, GPALS is also the facilitator of generous Government subsidies for rural/remote GP Anaesthetist locum relief.

That is, rural practices/hospitals which arrange their GP Anaesthetist locum (JCCA accredited) privately are also eligible to access the subsidies for locum travel costs and service fees. Access is easy - there is no administration fee or hidden costs and the paperwork is effortless (3-5 minutes to complete).

GPALS is seeking applications from Hosts and also GP Anaesthetists or Specialist Anaesthetists seeking locum work. A travel time subsidy is available to Locums per placement.

For more information, please visit the Australian Society of Anaesthetists at <http://www.asa.org.au> , call (02) 9327 4022 or send an email to gpals@fed.asa.org.au

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NRHA on TWITTER

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

Tony Abbott cross that he had to speak before (cf after) PM at AMA dinner:

<http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6560>

Topsy-turvy? Libs propose paid maternity leave funded thro progressive tax on business
The hospitals announcement should be seen more about federal financial relations than short-term health fix

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NRHA on YouTube

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

Nurse TV: The Country's Voice
Public Seminar 2009

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RURAL HEALTH IN THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ELECTION

As part of the State election campaign, the "Stock Journal" asked each Party to outline their plans for rural health, along with other rural issues.

The Liberals plan to redirect \$75 million in savings from rebuilding Royal Adelaide Hospital to country health. They propose a new hospital in the Barossa, oncology services at Pt Augusta, an extra \$4m for the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme, and to reinstate Country Hospital Boards.

The Liberals reply is at <http://sj.farmonline.com.au/news/state/agribusiness-and-general/political/liberals-show-commitment-to-country-sa/1779369.aspx>

The Labor Government said it will continue working to expand the capacity of the health system in country regions and increase the range of services available in country hospitals. The point to more than \$630 million investment in public hospitals and health services in country SA, including more that \$100m to help rebuild regional hospitals including at Berri, Ceduna and Whyalla plus \$12.5m for a GP Plus Centre in Port Pirie. Labor also says there will be more chemotherapy provided in country centres, that they are recruiting a specialist workforce for country mental health, and will nearly triple the number of dedicated mental health beds for country SA.

Labor's reply is at <http://sj.farmonline.com.au/news/state/agribusiness-and-general/political/labor-commitments-to-country-sa/1779372.aspx>

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RURAL HEALTH IN THE TASMANIAN ELECTION

Each of the major political parties has released general health policies for all Tasmanians. Labor's policy statement, available at <http://www.teambartlett.com.au/news/2010/03/more-gps-new-health-centres-to-ease-hospital-pressures>, commits to investing \$22.5 million to boost GP numbers and nurse practitioners across Tasmania and create four new walk-in health clinics to dramatically reduce pressures on public hospital emergency departments. Premier David Bartlett said \$12 million would be provided over three years to establish walk-in health clinics at the Royal Hobart, Launceston General, North West Regional and Mersey Community Hospitals. "We also will invest \$10.5 million over three years to help communities across Tasmania address the shortage of GPs, including the recruitment of more doctors and nurse practitioners to deliver outreach health services in areas of need."

The Liberals' have released a number of more specific statements. These include \$7.5 million for preventative programs

(http://www.tas.liberal.org.au/default.cfm?action=news_detail&ID=11107) , and specific commitments for the North West

(http://www.tas.liberal.org.au/default.cfm?action=news_detail&ID=11129) and the Central Highlands (http://www.tas.liberal.org.au/default.cfm?action=news_detail&ID=11082).

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HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY EMERGENCY RESPONSE

AIDA has conducted a health impact assessment of the Northern Territory Emergency Response in collaboration with the University of New South Wales' Centre for Health Equity Training, Research and Evaluation, and with assistance and financial support from the Fred Hollows Foundation.

The report was launched by Ms Pat Anderson, co-author of the 2007 report Little Children Are Sacred, on Friday 12 March 2010.

The report raises serious concerns about the continued future wellbeing of Indigenous children and families under the Northern Territory Intervention. The report assesses the potential health impacts of the Intervention on all aspects of Indigenous health and wellbeing, not just physical health.

Using methodology endorsed by the World Health Organisation, the report found that the Intervention would potentially lead to 'profound' long-term damage, and that any potential benefits to physical health were largely outweighed by negative impacts to psychological health, social health and wellbeing as well as cultural integrity.

The report also found that the increasing levels of mistrust caused by the previous government's ill-conceived and rushed implementation of the Intervention will continue to compromise the current government's ability to work in partnership with Aboriginal communities to achieve shared objectives.

Details at <http://www.aida.org.au/hia.aspx>

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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.

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CHILD MORTALITY TARGET: ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Indigenous children aged 0-4 years die at 3 times the rate of non-Indigenous children. This analysis by the National Indigenous Health Equality Council provides direction to achieve the Government's commitment to halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children by 2018. The analysis includes statistics on key drivers; trends and projections; and NIHEC's policy recommendations to inform progress towards the target. NIHEC notes the progress being made in Indigenous child mortality rates and is encouraged by positive trends in key areas, such as antenatal care. However, NIHEC is concerned about several key drivers where little or no improvement has been made, such as the increase in low birth weight babies born to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers.

Details at <http://www.nihec.gov.au/internet/nihcec/publishing.nsf/Content/Child-Mortality-Analysis>

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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.

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DOCTOR TRAINING FUNDS MUST LIFT RURAL WORKFORCE: PEAK RURAL MEDICAL COLLEGE

The medical college responsible for setting standards for rural and remote general practice in Australia has called for a clear focus on rebuilding the rural health workforce. Welcoming the Commonwealth Government's announcement of additional investments in GP and specialist training, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine said that the health workforce in most rural and remote communities was either overworked, inadequate, or non-existent.

The full text of the ACRRM statement is at

<http://www.aushealthcare.com.au/documents/news/16600/100317%20Australian%20College%20of%20Rural%20and%20Remote%20Medicine.pdf>

Meanwhile, Mick Gooda and Tom Calma, co- Chairs of the Close the Gap Campaign for Indigenous Health Equality, have welcomed the Prime Minister's announcement of a \$632 million doctors and specialists training package, but have called for a portion of the extra funds to be targeted to specific and focused initiatives to train Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors and

specialists. http://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/media/media_releases/2010/22_10.html

Rural Health Workforce Australia (RHWA) has welcomed the Federal Government's announcement today of increased funding for extra GP training places. "We expect this will be positive for rural and remote areas which are crying out for more people with primary health care skills," said Dr Kim Webber, CEO of RHWA. "We're particularly pleased to see an expansion of the Prevocational General Practice Placements Program (PGPPP). This will give hundreds more junior doctors the opportunity to discover how rewarding and enriching general practice can be."

http://www.rhwa.org.au/client_images/904096.pdf

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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>

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CLICK TO GIVE FREE MAMMOGRAMS

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

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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

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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

February 2010 issue now available. Contents include:

Editorials

Colorectal cancer screening and rural Australian communities

Determinants of mental health and well-being in rural communities: Do we understand enough to influence planning and policy?

Special Report - Ethics and trauma: lessons from media coverage of Black Saturday

Original Articles

Exploratory study examining barriers to participation in colorectal cancer screening

Mental health and well-being within rural communities: The Australian Rural Mental Health Study

Distress among rural residents: Does employment and occupation make a difference?

Mental health impact for adolescents living with prolonged drought

Synergy and sustainability in rural procedural medicine: Views from the coalface

Short Report - Greater Green Triangle Diabetes Prevention Program: Remaining treatment gaps in hypertension and dyslipidaemia

Grazing - A child-eating nutritionist?

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

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AIHW REPORT

Cardiovascular medicine supply highest in regional areas

People living in Australia's regional areas access cardiovascular disease (CVD) medicines at higher rates than people in major cities or remote areas, according to a report released today by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Media statement at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2010/mr20100317.cfm>

Full publication at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10580>

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RURAL HEALTH ON THE WEB

Rural Health Innovations

Rural Health Innovations, LLC (RHI) was created to respond to the emerging market of rural health. care as part of the overall health care industry.

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

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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 infoservice@lifeline.org.au and <http://www.lifeline.org.au>

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FEDERAL GOVERNMENT NEWS

The shortage of doctors in rural communities was one of the most frequently raised concerns on a recent tour of the country, as part of the Rudd Government's national health consultations. Now, if you're from rural and regional Australia you will soon find it easier to get in to see a doctor and a specialist. That's off the back of the Rudd Government's \$632 million investment to train an additional 6,000 GPs and specialists.

<http://alp.org.au/healthcare-rural-and-regional-australia>

<http://www.pm.gov.au/node/6576>

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-nr-nr046.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=3>

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-nr-nr047.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=3>

Government on Track to Close the Gap on Infant Mortality

Research that helps map the progress of improving Indigenous child mortality and health and sets targets was launched by an expert Indigenous health advisory body. The National Indigenous Health Equality Council (NIHEC) has completed two reports: the Child Mortality Targets: Recommendations and Analysis and National Target Setting Instrument. 'In turn, they will provide the basis for aggregate data and projections to targets which can be used by the States, Territories and the Australian Government to ensure that we meet the Close the Gap targets to which we are committed.'

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-ws-ws017.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=3>

\$10.7 Million to Combat Indigenous Smoking

The Minister for Indigenous Health, Warren Snowdon, today announced 14 sites across the country will benefit from a \$10.7 million funding round to promote innovative anti-tobacco campaigns and prevention strategies. 'Half of Indigenous adults are smokers, and the rate of smoking in the Indigenous population is about twice the rate of the non-Indigenous population. 'They tackle a variety of Indigenous groups.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-ws-ws015.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=3>

National Health and Hospitals Network Good for Rural Health

Rural and regional health services stand to benefit from the National Health and Hospitals Network announced by the Prime Minister, Treasurer and Health Minister. The National Health and Hospitals Network will be funded nationally, but run locally. Under the reforms to hospital funding announced by the Government this week, Local Hospital Networks in rural areas will be paid directly for the services they provide.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr10-ws-ws016.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2010&mth=3>

Using the power of education to tackle violence

Innovative programs to tackle family and community violence at the grass roots level will be rolled out in 14 Indigenous communities across the country with \$860,000 in Rudd Government funding.

http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/education_to_tackle_violence_9mar2010.htm

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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!

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SMALL HOSPITALS 'COULD GO BROKE' UNDER RUDD MODEL

(Extract from The Australian, 17 March 2009)

More than a quarter of Australia's hospitals could go broke under Kevin Rudd's activity-based funding model, according to expert research commissioned by the NSW Labor government. The research, by University of Wollongong academic Kathy Eagar, suggests hundreds of hospitals across rural and regional Australia that have 10 or fewer beds and unpredictable workloads would have to close if they were funded purely on the basis of the efficient cost of each service they provided.

The full article is at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/small-hospitals-could-go-broke-under-rudd-model/story-e6frg6n6-1225841577207>

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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>

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RURAL HEALTH ON THE ABC

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

Indigenous health funding a win-win

The West Australian General Practice Network says \$145 million in Indigenous health funding is a step in the right direction.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/17/2848178.htm>

Half the new doctors will go to regional areas

Under the Federal Government's plan to boost doctor numbers, there'll be 600 more medical graduates heading to the bush.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/201003/s2848171.htm>

Theodore great training ground for med students

What makes a small town a great place to train young doctor? Just ask Theodore doctor Bruce Chater. He originally thought he would spend a couple of years in the town, but has lasted 29 years. Dr Chater says the medical world in rural areas has changed considerably since he first started out.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/content/2010/s2848119.htm>

Rudd plan won't fix rural doctor shortage: RDA

The Rural Doctors Association (RDA) says the Federal Government's plan to train more doctors will not be enough to overcome the GP shortage in the bush.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/16/2846827.htm>

Greens seek assurance for regional hospitals

The Greens say they will be seeking assurances from the Federal Government that regional hospitals will not close under its new health funding plan.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/14/2845212.htm?section=justin>

Push on for more Indigenous health funds

The coordinator of a children's health program in the Torres Strait, off far north Queensland, says she will call for more funding for the region during meetings in Canberra today

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/10/2841403.htm>

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RDA NEWS

Extra doctor training places "very welcome".now it's time to back them up with a Rural Rescue Package

15 March 2010

http://www.rdaa.com.au/uploaded_documents/Extra%20training%20places%20--%20March%202010.pdf

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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>

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AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL TRENDS, MAR 2010 - ABS 4102.0

Although the overall level of health and wellbeing of Australians is relatively high compared with other countries, there are significant disparities in the health outcomes of different populations within Australia. In particular, people who live in areas with poorer socioeconomic conditions tend to have worse health than people from other areas. This article will use the Socio-Economic Index of Disadvantage for Areas (SEIFA) to examine the association between socioeconomic disadvantage and health.

<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features30Mar+2010>

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ARTICLES IN 'RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH'

'Evaluation of a rural chronic disease self-management program'

Chronic disease self management programs (CDSMP) have been shown to be effective in improving health and well-being across settings and conditions. But implementing such programs on a small scale in a rural town and in a country without a tradition of CDSMP presents challenges. This paper from rural Western Australia describes the experiences of one such attempt and gives advice to other rural health practitioners, managers and researchers considering similar programs.

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=1203>

'Comparison of injury-related hospitalised morbidity and mortality in urban and rural areas in Australia'

Life in the country can be more dangerous than the city. This compelling article highlights how and how many injuries happen in rural communities.

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=1326>

'Improving hearing health for farming families'

Occupational noise injury and hearing loss are a common features of agricultural workforces internationally. In Australia 60-70% of Australian farmers have measurable hearing loss, compared with 27% of the general population, and their families are also affected. With such a level of acquired injury it is astounding that this article is the first report of a community based initiative to specifically address hearing health issues in farming communities.

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=1350>

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CURRENT ISSUE OF eMJA

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

Blinding endemic trachoma remains a major public health problem in many Indigenous communities, despite the knowledge that has been gathered about its control since the 1930s, according to the authors of a study published in the *Medical Journal of Australia*. Prof Hugh Taylor, Harold Mitchell Chair of Indigenous Eye Health at the University of Melbourne, and

his co-authors conducted a national, random cluster sample survey of eye health in Indigenous children (5-15 years) and adults (40 years and older) in 30 communities across Australia.

<http://www.ama.com.au/node/5370>

Current issue: 15 March 2010

From the Editor's Desk: Rationing versus increased taxes

Editorials

Congenital anomalies - why bother?

Vertebroplasty, evidence and professional protest

Conference Report - Precincts, people and places: forging new partnerships in health innovation

Research

The effect of evidence-based medication use on long-term survival in patients hospitalised for heart failure in Western Australia

The prevalence and causes of vision loss in Indigenous Australians: the National Indigenous Eye Health Survey

A cluster randomised controlled trial to prevent injury due to falls in a residential aged care population

Use of chemotherapy and radiotherapy in patients with pancreatic cancer in Victoria (2002-2003): a retrospective cohort study

Medicine and the Community - Does access to compensation have an impact on recovery outcomes after injury?

For Debate

Vertebroplasty for painful acute osteoporotic vertebral fractures: recent Medical Journal of Australia editorial is not relevant to the patient group that we treat with vertebroplasty
Invited editorial presents an accurate summary of the results of two randomised placebo-controlled trials of vertebroplasty

Viewpoint - Driving to distraction - certification of fitness to drive with epilepsy

Lessons from Practice - Blindness from suprachoroidal haemorrhage in two patients with age-related macular degeneration on systemic anticoagulation therapy or an antiplatelet agent

Notable Cases - Chronic cutaneous ulcers secondary to *Haemophilus ducreyi* infection

Letters

The new "Indigenous health" incentive payment: issues and challenges

Whole-of-hospital response to admission access block: the need for a clinical revolution

Comparison of adult patients hospitalised with pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza and seasonal influenza during the "PROTECT" phase of the pandemic response

A pandemic response to a disease of predominantly seasonal intensity

Smoking history is clinically determinative and should be recorded

An open letter to politicians on climate change and obesity

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Consumer-Centred Health Care: Policy Innovation and Empowerment

National Conference, Melbourne 22-23 March 2010

Angliss Conference Centre

This conference will explore the agenda of consumer-centred health care, with a particular focus on consumers with complex and chronic health needs including disability, chronic and mental illness, and aged frailty. Day 1 will explore opportunities and scenarios in various sectors. Day 2 will explore challenges in implementation, with a focus on health plans for communities and consumers with common interests.

Key speakers include:

Christine Bennett, Chair, National Health and Hospital Reform Commission

Ian Hickie, Executive Director, Brain and Mind Research Institute
Just Stoelwinder, Chair, Health Services Management, Monash University
Maxine Drake, Health Consumers' Council of WA
Philip Davies, Health Systems and Policy, University of Qld
Samantha Thomas, Head, Consumer Health Research Group, Monash University
Barry Welsh, Ministry of Health, New Zealand

Key themes include:

Commonwealth reform initiatives: making change happen
Organising and empowering health consumers
Self-care and self-management in health
Consumer-directed aged care
Consumer-centred innovation in mental health
Consumer-centred innovation in drug and alcohol rehabilitation
Consumer-centred systems
Consumer-centred funding arrangements
Chronic illness consolidated budgets
Capitation-based payment systems
Health brokers, care co-ordinators, health intermediaries
Community engagement in health reform
Medicare Select: opt-in health plans
Partnerships between practitioners and consumers
Website information at <http://www.partnerships.org.au:80/NationalConference2010.htm>
Contact information
Vern Hughes, 03 9824 4713, 0425 722 890
info@partnerships.org.au

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Subject: International Healthy Parks Healthy People Congress

From: Elisia Dowling <edowling@parks.vic.gov.au>

With the increasing recognition of the value of nature to human health and wellbeing worldwide, Parks Victoria will host the inaugural International Healthy Parks Healthy People Congress at the new Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, Australia from 11-16 April 2010.

This will be a unique opportunity to bring together delegates from all relevant sectors (i.e. planning, community development, physical and mental health, tourism, climate change, education, recreation, ecology and park management) to explore how we can take better advantage of the way nature significantly contributes to our wellbeing and broader societal benefits.

We are seeking proposals under the following themes: Healthy Communities, Healthy Parks, Healthy Participation, Healthy People and subthemes.

In addition to the partners displayed on the website, the support of the World Health Organisation, United Nations World Tourism Organisation, US Federal Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the Australian Federal Government Department of Health & Ageing is being sought.

<http://www.healthyparkshealthypeoplecongress.org>

Elisia Dowling, Project Officer

International Healthy Parks Healthy People Congress April 11-16, 2010

Parks Victoria

Level 10/535 Bourke Street, Melbourne, Vic 3000, Australia

Ph: (03) 8680 2138 Fax: (03) 9613 4722 M: 0428 598 322

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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: Crossing Theatre, Narrabri (800 delegates)

Format: Morning sessions - presentations. Aft ernoon 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 fl exible 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>

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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?lId=698932&cId=1156791>

For more information regarding this conference, please call 1300 316 882 or visit

<http://www.indigservicedelivery.com>

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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

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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/>

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The 2nd Rural & Remote Health Scientific Symposium is to be held in Brisbane, 9-11

June 2010. Further information conference@ruralhealth.org.au

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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/>

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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>

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NAIDOC WEEK

4-11 July 2010

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

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

Alice Springs, 27-29 July

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

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Australian Rehabilitation & Assistive Technology Association National Conference

Assistive Technology: The tip of the iceberg

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>

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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>

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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

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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

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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

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

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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>

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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

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

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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.

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NRHA Media Release
18 March 2010

Government urged to ensure GPs and specialists will head for the bush

The Chair of the National Rural Health Alliance, Dr Jenny May, has called on the Government to ensure that "a fair proportion" of the extra GPs and specialists promised this week will spend some or all of their time practising in areas where shortages of health professionals are most severe.

The Alice Springs-based GP said the Alliance was pleased that general surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology - which are in particular need in rural and remote areas - are among the targeted specialties mentioned in the Prime Minister's commitment to double the number of training places for medical graduates by 2014.

"The announcement of increased training places in obstetrics and gynaecology signals a welcome investment in maternity services. Moves to reopen some of the birthing services that have been closed, or to establish new ones in growing regional centres, will have considerable impact on the morale of practitioners for the immediate future as well as providing services the local community values highly," Dr May said.

The Alliance has indicated its enthusiasm for working with governments to translate this week's announcement into plans that will begin quickly to ameliorate the medical shortages in rural and remote areas.

"The groundswell of support for the package will grow when people in under-serviced areas are confident they will very soon have better access to GPs and specialists," said Dr May. For this to occur it will be necessary to increase commitments to specific programs targeted to education, recruitment, retention and support for rural practice. The Alliance has suggested a range of initiatives to speed the process, backed by ongoing investment in programs that are already working to encourage rural students to become involved in medicine and 'stick it out'. The Rural Medical Infrastructure Fund (RMIF) and the Rural Education Infrastructure Development (REID) scheme have the capacity to support recruitment, retention and the establishment of multi-disciplinary health-care teams while providing rooms for outreach and visiting services.

"We believe investments of this kind should be planned within regions and local districts in a co-ordinated fashion. Insufficient accommodation in rural communities for undergraduates, registrars and other junior doctors or specialists is a frequent impediment and is a key issue that justifies further investment in programs such as REID."

Before the teaching and support of young doctors can occur, expanded support is needed for GP and specialist teachers and the practices and institutions in which they work. The development of multidisciplinary teams and collaborative teaching and learning environments must continue to be a cornerstone of both training and functioning rural environments.

"It is troubling to find some of the State jurisdictions closing facilities and removing positions that are integral to teaching and learning in rural and regional areas. We are hoping the new national rural health strategy being developed will provide a set of benchmarks for rural and regional areas to measure up to, so we can ensure that teaching and support of training occurs and is expanded into regional settings," Dr May said.

"Allocation to regional and rural areas of a substantial proportion of the Government's \$1.1 billion for clinical training and support for clinical supervisors would be another essential complementary measure. This is a major opportunity to have a fair share of the funding flowing to the bush - and strong Commonwealth guidance and support for Health Workforce Australia will be invaluable.

"Despite the anticipated tight budget, we are hopeful there will be further news to come about equivalence funding to rural and remote areas - perhaps in the context of regional Primary Care Organisations (PCOs), their relationship with the hospital networks and preventive care," Dr May said.

The Alliance has encouraged the Government to commit urgently to even a modest package of measures which makes it clear that it is a priority to ensure that a fair proportion of the new GPs and specialists promised this week will work in rural and remote areas.

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NRHA Media Release

15 March 2010

Boost in doctor numbers will be welcome

The Prime Minister's announcement of major new investments to boost the number of medical graduates who choose to train as GPs or other specialists will be welcomed by people in rural and remote areas.

Dr Jenny May, Chair of the National Rural Health Alliance, said people in rural and remote areas have the poorest access to medical practitioners and that every effort is needed to make sure a fair proportion of new graduates choose to practise in rural Australia.

"It is important that these initiatives are implemented as soon as practicable to address long-standing medical shortages in the rural and remote health sector," Dr May said.

"Today's announcement provides a basis for optimism that national workforce shortages can be overcome. However, to ensure that one third or more of practitioners choose to work in rural, regional and remote areas, there needs to be a strong and ongoing commitment to health infrastructure, undergraduate rural placements, vocational placements, and locum and continuing professional development support in those areas - as well as sustainable practices that provide the career structures and financial incentives for doctors in rural areas."

The Alliance is pleased that this next stage of the Government's health reform agenda has been revealed early and hopes agreements being negotiated between the Commonwealth, States and Territories will underpin better access to services in rural and remote regions.

"We're particularly eager to hear about the Government's intentions, previously flagged by the Prime Minister, to address the needs of nurses and other health professionals and to provide additional services in primary care, hospital beds, and dental, mental and aged care. This will provide a fuller picture of the proposed health reform agenda so that we can move from discussions to action," Dr May said.

