

NRHA eforum 13 July 2007 - Article

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum 13 July 2007

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HEALTH PROFESSIONALS PREPARE PM FOR THE LONG HAUL

The National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) has alerted the Prime Minister that it will take a generation or more to eradicate the primary causes of community and family dysfunction in the Northern Territory. NRHA chairperson Professor John Wakerman also cautioned in a letter to Mr Howard that alleviating core problems will require significant investment in areas not traditionally linked to the health sector.

The full text of the Alliance statement is at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/media/media%20release%20pm%20letter.pdf> and is reprinted below.

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INDIGENOUS CHILD HEALTH

Details of the Government's operation are at <http://www.atsia.gov.au/Media/media07/default.aspx>. The statement by Health Minister Tony Abbott on indigenous child health checks is at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr07-ta-abb084.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2007&mth=7>

Some more ongoing reaction to the Government's indigenous child protection plan.

Australia's peak Aboriginal health body has urged the Federal Government to work closely

with national Aboriginal health leaders to ensure community engagement and adequate resourcing are central to Mr Howard's plans for the Northern Territory. NACCHO CEO, Dea Delaney Thiele, says a meeting in Sydney of 13 Aboriginal health groups had encouraged the Prime Minister to read the Little Children are Sacred report to better guide his response to child sexual abuse. "Mr Howard's response bares no relation to the report's 97 recommendations-it's as if he hasn't even read it," says Ms Delaney Thiele.

The meeting was the first meeting between state, territory and federal representative bodies of the Aboriginal community controlled health services (including Torres Strait Islander health services), and Indigenous medical professional organisations such as the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association, the Indigenous Dentists' Association of Australia and the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses. President of the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association, Dr Mark Wenitong said: "This historic meeting gives us all a great head start on developing a common position in relation to key issues in Indigenous health. We aim to work collaboratively with governments, Indigenous communities and the Australian public to achieve real improvements in Indigenous health." Further information is at http://www.hreoc.gov.au/media_releases/2007/46_07.html

The Northern Territory's peak Aboriginal health body has called the Prime Minister's plan to give sexual health checks to all Aboriginal children in the NT a "racist, divisive and illegal" act that would alienate people throughout the Territory and cause great social resistance.

The Central Australian Aboriginal Congress welcomed the Australian government's recognition that the Territory's Aboriginal communities are in a State of Emergency and that urgent intervention is necessary.

"Aboriginal people have been calling for the Commonwealth to exercise its special constitutional responsibility for our health and welfare for decades. This should occur across Australia and not just in the NT," said the Congress Director, Stephanie Bell.

"However, it will be critical for the success of the implementation of this initiative that the Australian government works with Aboriginal people and our organisations, and listens and responds to genuine concerns. We call upon the Australian government to work with the network of Aboriginal community controlled health services and our peak body AMSANT," she said.

The Australian General Practice Network (AGPN) and the General Practice and Primary Health Northern Territory (GPPHNT) urged for calm over the health checks for Indigenous children. AGPN Chair Dr Tony Hobbs said these types of health checks are already being conducted on a regularly basis as part of an annual health assessment offered to Aboriginal children. There will be no compulsory forensic sexual health check as part of this initial examination. See the joint statement at http://www.agpn.com.au/client_images/108533.pdf

A human rights based approach is vital to address the challenges in Indigenous communities The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) has welcomed the

Australian Government's announcements to act to protect the rights of Indigenous women and children in the Northern Territory and urges it to adopt an approach that is consistent with Australia's international human rights obligations. The HREOC statement is at http://www.hreoc.gov.au/media_releases/2007/45_07.html

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From: Fiona Armstrong
Subject: Indigenous health

This (see link below) may be of some use in developing responses to the current Indigenous initiatives and of interest to Council in considering them: A comparison of Australian New Zealand and Canadian systems for indigenous health
<http://www.onemda.unimelb.edu.au/docs/dp13.pdf>

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CANCER RATES HIGHER IN RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS

In rural and remote areas of Australia, lifestyle factors like excessive sun exposure, higher smoking rates and a tendency to postpone visits to the doctor, are driving up cancer rates, particularly for men, according to a report released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

The AIHW statement is at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2007/mr20070628.cfm> and the full publication at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10476>

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HEALTH REFORM: MAKING A GOOD SYSTEM BETTER

Australia's health care system needs reform. Despite good health outcomes overall, our current system fails Indigenous people, those in remote areas and those living on low incomes or who are otherwise disadvantaged. There are quality and safety issues.

A national Summit being held in Canberra (Monday 30-Tuesday 31 July) will try to answer these questions and push forward the debate about health reform. What would a better system look like and how will we make progress towards it? How will consumers, health professionals and citizens benefit from reform? And what will be the costs of our failure to act?

The full text of the statement by the Australian Health Care Reform Alliance is at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/news/ReleaseSummit3July.pdf> and is reprinted below.

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HREF NEWS

"Clinical Toxicology: Bites and Stings" - rpt national satellite television broadcast Tuesday

24th July 8:00pm EST (repeated Friday 27th July 12:30pm EST)

Presented by the Rural Health Education Foundation. Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing

This program examines injury from Australia's most common and notorious snakes, spiders and marine stingers using a series of case studies illustrating management issues from pre hospital care through to long term management of ongoing sequelae. Some of the "myths" associated with envenomation and management will also be explored.

Panellists include: Chair: Dr Norman Swan, Presenter of the Health Report on ABC Radio National Dr Geoff Isbister, Clinical Toxicologist, Department of Clinical Toxicology and Pharmacology, Newcastle Mater Hospital, NSW; and Senior Research Fellow, Tropical Toxinology Unit, Menzies School of Health Research, Charles Darwin University, Darwin. Assoc Prof Drew Richardson, Emergency Physician, Emergency Department, Canberra Hospital; and Chair of Road Trauma and Emergency Medicine at the ANU Medical School. TBC, Rural General Practitioner. Mr Phil Munro, Registered Nurse, Pambula Hospital, NSW.

Further details about the program visit <http://www.rhef.com.au/programs/611/611.html>

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9th NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE - PROCEEDINGS OUT NOW!

7 - 10 March 2007, Albury, New South Wales

Visit the Conference website for post-conference information at <http://9thnrhc.ruralhealth.org.au/>

Communiqué & Recommendations are at <http://9thnrhc.ruralhealth.org.au/recommendations/?IntCatId=16>

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

The August 2007 issue of the journal is available online now at <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/links/toc/ajr>. Articles include:

- * Analysis to synergy: Why coordination of rural initiatives at metropolitan universities is important and timely
- * Harnessing a University to address rural health workforce shortages in Australia
- * Acute rheumatic fever: Adherence to secondary prophylaxis and follow up of Indigenous patients in the Katherine region of the Northern Territory
- * Evidence-based use of medications in patients with coronary artery disease in a rural Australian community

- * Rural adolescents experiencing an urban transition
- * Detecting depression in the aged: Is there concordance between screening tools and the perceptions of nursing home staff and residents? A pilot study in a rural aged care facility
- * Rural public dental practice in Australia: Perspectives of Tasmanian government-employed dentists
- * 'I don't want to be in that big city; this is my country here': Research findings on Aboriginal peoples' preference to die at home
- * Ocular health status of rural dwellers in south-western Nigeria
- * Short Reports
- * Grazings
- * From the Journal Associates

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

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PARTYline Newsletter

The Alliance's newsletter, PARTYline, is a means of exchanging information between those with an interest in rural health, including friends of the Alliance, health consumers, health professionals, students and policy makers. Contributors report on their personal rural experiences, on programs with which they have been involved, provide information on new initiatives and resources, and it is a vehicle for opinions on rural health issues and events.

PARTYline has a print circulation around Australia of 13,000 and is also available on-line below. PARTYline readily accepts contributions from readers - articles (up to 500 words) and photographs can be sent to partyline@ruralhealth.org.au

Partyline Edition 30 includes:

- * highlights from the 9th National Rural Health Conference, including reviews of keynote addresses, in-depth discussion of health reform, the role of the arts in achieving good health, impressions from delegates, student voices, policy impact of recommendations, rural health winners, and pictorial highlights
- * equal health within a generation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- * responses to Budget 2007-08
- * writing for publication
- * telling your rural health story
- * rural health news
- * resources
- * dates for your calendar.

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LABOR'S REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Labor's commitment and approach to regional development has been outlined by the Federal Shadow Minister for Trade and Regional Development, Simon Crean. It includes:

- * Recognition that a one-size-fits-all approach will not work and support for local solutions which stack up;
- * Retaining Commonwealth regional programs, but restoring the highest levels of transparency and accountability to them;
- * Creating a stronger regional development network. Labor will establish Regional Development Australia by giving the network of Area Consultative Committees, which Labor set up in office, a wider mandate to provide high-level advice and establish region-wide partnerships;
- * Ensuring regional issues are considered in all areas of policy, not just through one portfolio, as is the current case. Labor has committed to break down the national budget by region to give communities a greater say on the allocation of funds to their region;
- * Responding to creative and innovative solutions across all portfolios to enable better service delivery;
- * A new commitment that all Australians, regardless of where they live, should have reasonable and affordable access to broadband services, which Labor will deliver through its commitment to roll out a Fibre-to-the-Node network.

The full text of Mr Crean's statement is at <http://www.alp.org.au/media/0707/msrd070.php>

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LIFELINE'S JUST ASK - 1 300 13 11 14

Your Rural Mental Health Information Service

Lifeline's Just ask is a rural mental health information service. Information provided includes: referral to services and web sites, printed material and a range of self help resources. The self-help resources focus on practical steps to help promote mental health in a range of areas. For information and copies of resources call or visit <http://www.justask.org.au> and further information is available at national@lifeline.org.au and <http://www.lifeline.org.au>

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NEW ARTICLES IN RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH

'Rural medical education: five medical students spend a year in rural Port Lincoln, Australia'
Rural medical practices are increasingly taking on a major undergraduate teaching role. But could you sustain five students studying for the whole year in your practice? Experience from South Australia suggests you can!

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=586>

'Problems with provision: barriers to drinking water quality and public health in rural Tasmania, Australia'

An assured, safe water supply has been taken for granted in the developed world. This study

from Tasmania, Australia raises serious issues of concern regarding inequity in the provision of safe drinking water to rural communities.

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=627>

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INDIGENOUS LABOUR MARKET STATISTICS

(ABS Cat 6287.0 - Labour Force Characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Experimental Estimates from the Labour Force Survey, 2006)

In 2006, an estimated 186,900 Indigenous people were in the labour force - a labour force participation rate for all Indigenous people aged 15 years and over of 59%. Of the Indigenous people in the labour force, more lived in Regional areas (78,000 people) than in Major Cities (62,700) or Remote areas (46,200). Major Cities had the highest participation rate at 64% in 2006.

In 2006, there were an estimated 160,300 Indigenous people aged 15 years and over in employment. This represented half of the Indigenous population aged 15 years and over. After declining to a low in 2004 (45%), the employment to population ratio for Indigenous Australians has increased to 50% in 2006.

In 2006, there were an estimated 54,800 Indigenous people employed in Major Cities, 63,200 employed in Regional areas and 42,200 employed in Remote areas. The employment to population ratio was 56% in Major Cities, 47% in Regional areas and 49% in Remote areas.

In 2006, the unemployment rate for the Indigenous population was 14%. The unemployment rate for Indigenous people was 13% in Major Cities, 19% in Regional areas, and 9% in Remote areas.

The full publication is available at

<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/ProductsbyCatalogue/203A6267794D53EECA2570AB0082C2F0?OpenDocument>

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BUSH CRISIS LINE - 1800 805 391

Bush Crisis Line is a twenty-four hour confidential telephone support and debriefing service for multi-disciplinary remote and rural health practitioners and their families. It is staffed by qualified psychologists with remote and cross-cultural experience, is toll free and available from anywhere in Australia. For more information <http://www.bushcrisisline.org.au>

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2006 CENSUS

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has started making information from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing available. For example, MapStats provides thematically mapped Census statistics for your chosen location - the maps illustrate the distribution of selected population, ethnicity, education, family, income, labour force, and dwelling characteristics.

See <http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/d3310114.nsf/home/Census+data>

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RURAL HEALTH ON THE WEB

(From Google Alert at <http://www.googlealert.com>)

Rural Health Research

The Office of Rural Health Policy funds research activities at eight rural health research centers. <http://www.ruralhealthresearch.org>

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MORE SUPPORT FOR GP OBSTETRICIANS IN RURAL AREAS

The Australian Government will further improve incentives for GPs providing obstetric services in rural and remote areas. Health Minister Tony Abbott announced that those GPs who may not meet the requirement of delivering 20 babies per year, but are fully involved in the local obstetric roster, may be eligible for a payment. His statement is at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr07-ta-abb083.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2007&mth=7>

The announcement was welcomed by the Rural Doctors' Association - see http://www.rdaa.com.au/uploaded_documents/Rural%20doctors%20welcome%20Governme nt%20announcement%20on%20obstetrics%20support%20--%20July%202007.pdf

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RURAL HEALTH ON THE ABC

(From ABC Rural Newsletter, <http://www.abc.net.au/rural/default.htm> and Health Updates, <http://www.abc.net.au/health/maillinglist.htm>)

ABORIGINAL PEOPLE DIVIDED OVER GOVT EMERGENCY PLANS (AM: 22/06/2007)

- <http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2007/s1958780.htm>
- <http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2007/s1958781.htm>
- <http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2007/s1959013.htm>
- <http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2007/s1959018.htm>

HEALTH REPORT: Little children are sacred: what's an evidence-based response? Monday 2 July, 8.30am, Radio National In this program we try to clear away the emotion, the hype surrounding the Australian Government's emergency response to child sexual abuse in Aboriginal communities. What can doctors who may be inexperienced in sexual abuse usefully do and what solutions are known to work? <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/healthreport/>

Govt says more doctors, nurses needed for Indigenous plan <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/07/01/1966907.htm>

Former Army chief hits out at Indigenous plan <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/07/02/1967076.htm>

Indigenous abuse crackdown widens

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/07/02/1967115.htm>

Indigenous leader not impressed by sex abuse 'blanketing'

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/07/02/1967194.htm>

Debate continues over Indigenous permit removal

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/07/02/1967288.htm>

Plan 'once in a lifetime chance' for remote communities

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/07/02/1967368.htm>

AMA APPEALS TO DOCTORS TO VOLUNTEER FOR INDIGENOUS HEALTH (PM: 28/06/2007)

<http://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2007/s1965093.htm>

DR ANDREW GUNN - LOSING THE CONQUEST: INDIGENOUS HEALTH

(Perspective: 03/07/2007)

The historical record confirms that, in all times and places, defeated peoples whose land is seized do badly. History gets written, and sometimes totally sanitised, by the victors. Despite this, Aboriginal health statistics - for instance a two-decade deficit in life expectancy - provide an objective and persistent reminder that something is very wrong.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/perspective/stories/2007/1967633.htm>

LITTLE CHILDREN ARE SACRED. WHAT'S AN EVIDENCE-BASED RESPONSE?

(Health Report: 02/07/2007)

In this program we try to clear away the emotion, the hype surrounding the Australian Government's emergency response to child sexual abuse in Aboriginal communities. What does the evidence actually say about this problem? What can doctors who may be inexperienced in sexual abuse usefully do and what solutions are known to work?

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/healthreport/stories/2007/1964851.htm>

ALL IN THE MIND: Deep listening: working with Indigenous mental distress

Saturday 7 July, 1.05 pm, Radio National

'How do I get them to talk?' Mental health and other professionals inexperienced at working with Indigenous clients struggle - with the limits of their cultural awareness, language barriers and the historical legacies of mistrust and misunderstanding. Cultural competency is more than sharing a joke. So what is it? And how can psychologists, doctors and others acquire it?

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/allinthemind/>

Rural cancer patients need more travel assistance, says report

The Cancer Council says a new report shows rural patients need better travel assistance schemes. (02/07/2007) <http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/2007/s1967642.htm>

INDIGENOUS HEALTH CHECKS BEGIN IN NT (AM: 10/07/2007)

<http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2007/s1974334.htm>

<http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2007/s1971424.htm>

<http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2007/s1971734.htm>

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LABOR POLICY ON PREVENTATIVE HEALTH

Federal Opposition Leader Kevin Rudd has announced that Federal Labor will:

- *. Develop a *National Preventative Health Strategy* to provide a blueprint for tackling the burden of chronic disease currently caused by obesity, tobacco, and excessive consumption of alcohol. The Strategy will be supported by an expert Taskforce.
- *. *Shift the focus from so-called "six minute medicine"* in general practice by beginning a reform process to provide incentives for GPs to practice quality preventative health care;
- *. Broaden the focus of the major health care agreement between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories beyond hospital funding by developing a *National Preventative Health Care Partnership*; and
- *. In its first term, commission the Treasury to produce a series of *definitive reports on the impact of chronic disease on the Australian economy*, and the economic benefits of a greater focus on prevention in health care.

Details are at <http://www.alp.org.au/media/0607/mshealoo281.php>

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AHCRA National Health Reform Summit 2007

The Australian Health Care Reform Alliance is holding a National Health Reform Summit 'Reform in the Australian Health Sector' on 30-31 July 2007 in Canberra. Program and online registration are available at <http://www.healthreform.org.au/>

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From: Jane Howorth - ECC Information Desk
Subject: Update on Rural Critical Care Conference

The 2007 Rural Critical Care Conference is taking place in Ballina NSW, 24 - 25 August. Further info is available on the conference website <http://www.ruralcriticalcare.asn.au>

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From: Joy Burch
Subject: 2007 Mount Isa Remote Health Conference 24-26 August 2007

Every two years Mount Isa hosts a conference aimed at bringing together people with an interest in all aspects of health in remote Australia. Previous events in 2003 and 2005 were immensely successful with attendees finding the presentations 'focussed and relevant' and many going on to indicate their willingness to attend again.

The purpose of this year's event is to provide a forum for information exchange and debate about issues relevant to remote health with a particular focus on the following themes:

- * Clinical practice in remote areas;
- * Population Health including Indigenous health;
- * Workforce supply, education and training;
- * Research outcomes such as innovation in health service delivery.

This conference is convened by the Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health in collaboration with a range of stakeholders including, Queensland Health, the Royal Flying Doctors Service, James Cook University, Oxfam, North and West Queensland Primary Health Care and the Mount Isa City Council. Through involvement of such a wide range of remote health organisations the multidisciplinary nature of this conference is assured.

Once again the Mount Isa Remote Health Conference promises to be a fantastic event and, through its small size and limited registrations, represents a great opportunity to establish networks with other remote health professionals.

Details are available at <http://micrrh.jcu.edu.au/conferences-workshops/remotely-interested/>

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 web: <http://www.arhen.org.au>
 journal: <http://www.rrh.org.au>

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From: Nicky Reavell
 Subject: 9th Australian Palliative Care Conference

Partners Across the Lifespan

Palliative Care Victoria in conjunction with Palliative Care Australia is hosting the 9th Australian Palliative Care Conference. It will take place at the Melbourne Convention Centre, Victoria Australia from Tuesday 28 to Friday 31 August 2007. The conference website is <http://www.iceaustralia.com/apcc2007>

Palliative Care Australia
 PO Box 24
 Deakin West ACT 2600
 Ph: +61 2 6232 4433
 Fax: +61 2 6232 4434
<http://www.pallcare.org.au>

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ARRWAG INDIGENOUS HEALTH WORKFORCE FORUM ON 31 AUGUST 2007

Australian Rural and Remote Workforce Agencies Group
2007 National Policy Forum on Indigenous Health Workforce Issues
FREMANTLE, WA, 31 AUGUST 2007

Contact:
Ph: 03 9662 2625
Fax: 03 9662 4830
Email: forum@arrwag.com.au
<http://www.arrwag.com.au>

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THE LIME CONNECTION II "CULTURES ACROSS THE INDIGENOUS HEALTH SPECTRUM: ACHIEVING BETTER OUTCOMES"

The Medical Deans of Australia and New Zealand (Medical Deans) and the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA) announces The LIME Connection II conference, held in Sydney from Sunday 23rd to Tuesday 25th September, 2007.

Leaders in the field of Indigenous medical education and practice will present their experiences and share innovative approaches through a mix of keynote addresses, oral and poster presentations, group discussions and a public lecture. Topics will include:

- * reviewing medical schools' progress towards implementing the curriculum framework and Indigenous student initiatives
- * learning and sharing with other health science disciplines, postgraduate medical education bodies, medical colleges and divisions
- * defining cultural safety in Australian health and medical education
- * looking toward the future to examine what's possible and where we go from here

For further information, please visit the LIME Connection II web site at <http://www.limenetwork.net.au/conference/welcome>

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From: Michael Blair
Subject: Australian College of Mental Health Nurses 33rd Annual International Conference

The Australian College of Mental Health Nurses is to hold its 33rd Annual Conference in Cairns in 2007.

The theme for the conference, "Mental Health Nurses: Making Waves", not only illustrates the tropical location of the 2007 conference, it is also intended to reflect the idea that historically derived factors influencing development in Mental Health Nursing, reach out and influence others with related concerns.

Waves convey ideas of movement and change. History evolves as events change. Its influence on the future changes with developments that are based on the lessons learnt and experienced. As a wave rolls through, its predecessor is completely changed and yet waves are comprised of those that have come before. Our theme challenges presenters to address

related topics. We know that mental health issues will remain important to communities and individuals in the years and decades to come. Mental health nursing is challenged to make waves and to be a key player in this expanding sphere.

The ACMHN Inc., through its national Conferences, local seminars, educational functions, scholarships and awards, has enjoyed a long and productive relationship with key sponsors. We hope that existing sponsors will take this opportunity to continue a mutually rewarding relationship, and that new groups will be inspired to join us.

The Web site URL for persons to express an interest in attending or sponsoring the conference is <http://www.astmanagement.com.au/anzcmhc7/>

All those persons that express an interest in attending via the web site will go into the draw for a free registration to the conference.

The conference will be held at the International Hotel in Cairns from the 8th to the 12th of October 2007.

For further information contact:

Mick Blair

Co-convenor

ACMHN Inc. 33rd International Conference 2007

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ANTI-POVERTY WEEK

Help fight poverty and hardship in Australia and overseas. Organise an activity during the Week - 14-20 October 2007 - big or small, local or national. FOR INFO & IDEAS, see <http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au> OR CONTACT US AT 1300 797 290; or apw@antipovertyweek.org.au

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From: Scott Wagner

Subject: NSW Rural Allied Health Conference 2007, Dubbo, October 18-19

Details are at <http://www.nswrahc.com>.

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UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, SCHOOL OF RURAL HEALTH, 2007 RESEARCH CONFERENCE

The University of Melbourne, School of Rural Health, invites you to participate in the 3rd Annual Shepparton Research Conference on Tuesday 27th November 2007 from 9am to 5pm.

The research conference, entitled: "Moving Forward: Rural Research & Knowledge Transfer" is intended for individuals and organisations with an interest in rural health, including general

practice, primary health care, integrated care and population health, research and evaluation. Registrations open 2 July 2007. Delegates can register online by accessing the School of Rural health website <http://www.ruralhealth.unimelb.edu.au> and clicking on the conference link after that date. A hardcopy of the registration pack can be obtained by emailing the Conference Secretariat.

The School of Rural Health welcomes your participation with papers, posters and other presentations at this forthcoming conference. The call for Abstracts is now open and must be submitted via email to the Conference Secretariat by close of business Monday 3rd September, 2007. Please circulate to colleagues interested in research.

Pauline Venn Conference Secretariat pvenn@unimelb.edu.au Ph: 03 5823 4532

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From: Jane Howorth - ECC Information Desk
Subject: NSW Rural Mental Health Conference

This year's NSW Rural Mental Health Conference is taking place in Batemans Bay, 3 - 5 December 2007, hosted by the Greater Southern Area Health Service. Further information on the conference website: <http://www.rmhconference.com> or by contacting info@eastcoastconferences.com.au, tel 02 6650 9800.

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From: Mcalpin, Susan
Subject: International Rural Network World Rural Forum

The International Rural Network World Rural Forum, India, Late Jan-Early Feb 2008: Innovation for Sustainable Local Development.

The main focus of the Forum will be on innovation in education, health, resource management, governance, and sustainable development to improve the quality of life of rural people and reduce rural poverty and social exclusion.

The forum will be based in the beautiful rural town of Udaipur, Rajasthan, which is also the home of IRN Board Member Lakshmi Murthy.

The Forum will involve five days, with at least one day (or equivalent) in local field visits to see the relevant work of NGOs etc. There are likely to be optional additional visits after the Forum either to the famous Institute of Rural Management in Anand, Gujarat and/or to the equally famous Birla Institute of Technology in Pilani, Rajasthan.

The date of the conference will be around the end of January or beginning of February 2008. If you are interested, please check out our website at <http://www.International-Rural-Network.org> and email Nicola.swan@btinternet.com to register your interest in keeping informed as soon as possible.

Poverty and disadvantage is a common feature of rural areas and people across the world. This is explicitly recognised in the UN Millennium Development Goals. By providing a

global forum for academics, practitioners, NGOs and policy makers concerned with sustainable rural development, education and health, the IRN aims to stimulate exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas, and create regional and global support networks. In this way it helps to develop a storehouse of knowledge and expertise on rural concerns, and to raise the profile and policy impacts of rural people, their NGOs and other organisations aiming for local empowerment, engagement, and supporting activities including policies.

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From: Emma Grayson
Subject: 10th International Paediatric and Child Health Nursing Conference

The 10th International Paediatric and Child Health Nursing Conference is to be held at the Holiday Inn Esplanade and Darwin Entertainment Centre, Northern Territory, from Wednesday, 30 April to Friday, 2 May 2008. The conference is being hosted by the Australian Confederation of Paediatric and Child Health Nurses. The conference is expected to attract between 200 and 400 delegates from across Australia and abroad.

Through the implementation of the theme "Crossing barriers", this conference aims to illustrate that barriers can and must be crossed to improve health outcomes for children and young people. The conference aims are: to advance paediatric and child health nursing's contribution to health care and facilitate the dissemination of evidence highlighting effective nursing interventions to arise the profile of the benefits of interdisciplinary collaboration to identify future directions for paediatric and child health nursing to provide a forum that stimulates debate and collegiality.

For more information, to register your expression of interest or to download the call for abstracts, please visit the conference website at <http://www.ipchnconference.com.au> or by contacting the conference secretariat via email at info@ipchnconference.com.au or by telephone +61 7 3858 5503.

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POPULATION HEALTH CONGRESS 2008
A Global World - Practical action for health and Well-being

Come to Brisbane and join in Australia's population health event of the decade. Four organisations are working together to provide a line-up of international and national speakers that promises to be excellent.

The Population health Congress 2008 will be held on July 7-9 in the Brisbane Convention and exhibition Centre. Regular updates on Congress 2008 will be available at <http://www.populationhealthcongress.org.au> - log on to register your interest.

Enquiries:
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congress2008@confco.com.au

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CONTRIBUTION AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION AND DISCLAIMER

The NRHA e-forum is edited by a third party moderator, Jim Groves. Contributions are sought on any topic relevant to rural health concerns. Please send contributions to the moderator at grovesc@winshop.com.au (do not "reply" to this email - send contributions to grovesc@winshop.com.au).

As such, the Alliance does not control postings and the contents do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Alliance. Nor do postings necessarily reflect the view of Jim Groves or any organisation he is associated with. Jim Groves can be contacted at grovesc@winshop.com.au

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

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NRHA Media Release, 5 July 2007
Health professionals prepare PM for the long haul

The National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) has alerted the Prime Minister that it will take a generation or more to eradicate the primary causes of community and family dysfunction in the Northern Territory. NRHA chairperson Professor John Wakerman also cautioned in a letter to Mr Howard that alleviating core problems will require significant investment in areas not traditionally linked to the health sector.

"These investments in education, housing, employment, water, transport and food will have to be at substantial levels - and ongoing, he said.

"We hope that such long-term investments in rural, regional and remote areas will be forthcoming. Like the emergency response, the long-term action must be well-resourced and comprehensive.

"To recruit and retain the numbers of health professionals necessary will require major development of health service infrastructure, establishment of high quality management and governance systems involving communities, and appropriate linkages between key service, training and professional support agencies.

The NRHA said it understands the Prime Minister's "significant personal investment" in the recent taskforce initiative, but noted that child abuse is a national problem not confined to Indigenous communities.

"We are pleased to understand that the proposed health checks will relate to general health and wellbeing, not just sexual abuse. In planning for widespread child health checks it is essential to recognise that the children in most Aboriginal families living in the Northern Territory are not in jeopardy," Professor Wakerman wrote.

The NRHA confirmed support for some of the proposed measures, such as extra policing and reduction of alcohol availability, including in regional centres, but advised these measures should be complemented by a range of proven community-based strategies such as home

visiting services by suitably qualified nurses and other professionals.

The purpose of writing to the Prime Minister, with copies to Health Minister Tony Abbott and Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough, was to offer the NRHA's help in meeting the commitment and ensuring the Alliance's concerns were clear about how plans should proceed.

"The government is clearly aware of the critical importance of collaboration with Indigenous leaders and communities, and with other levels of government, to ensure successful longer term outcomes," said Professor Wakerman.

"We are aware of the refinements to the commitment initially made, and urge your government's early consultation with the Aboriginal Medical Service Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT), whose advice represents the views of Aboriginal health services providers on the ground.

"For the professional health and community services work proposed, we do not support the use of volunteers who are unfamiliar with working in remote communities. We trust this is not what you have in mind. For people involved with delivering the envisaged services, cultural safety, cultural respect and cultural security frameworks need to be taken seriously."

Professor Wakerman said Aboriginal Health Workers play a key role in improving health outcomes in their communities and that further development and support for the profession would enhance the chances of long-term success.

The NRHA represents 27 national organisations, including consumers and providers of health services in rural and remote areas. Among these are the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association, the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

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AHCRA Media release 4 July 2007

Health reform: making a good system better
AHCRA Summit 30-31 July

Australia's health care system needs reform. Despite good health outcomes overall, our current system fails Indigenous people, those in remote areas and those living on low incomes or who are otherwise disadvantaged.

There are quality and safety issues. Our health workforce is overstretched. Jurisdictional inefficiencies plague our system of health funding and 'the blame game' between federal and state/territory governments distracts attention from important policy decisions.

How do we shift the overwhelming emphasis away from hospital-based acute care services? How can we do more to promote health and prevent illness as the burden of chronic disease continues to increase? How can consumers be more involved in the health system and its management?

A national Summit being held in Canberra (Monday 30-Tuesday 31 July) will try to answer these questions and push forward the debate about health reform. What would a better system look like and how will we make progress towards it? How will consumers, health professionals and citizens benefit from reform? And what will be the costs of our failure to act?

This public event is being organised to stimulate national level debate about the future shape of the Australian health system. It is open to anyone interested in maintaining Australia's reputation as a country that gives a fair go to all -- and in applying this maxim to health services and health outcomes.

Speakers at the Summit will include John Menadue, Stephen Leeder Judith Dwyer, Jeff Richardson, Fiona Tito-Wheatland, Kerren Clark and Tony McBride and Government and Opposition spokespersons have been invited.

People wishing to attend should register online at the AHCRA website or through the NRHA website at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>

Some assistance is available for bona fide consumer organisations to attend.

The Summit is being convened by the Australian Health Care Reform Alliance (AHCRA), a coalition of organisations committed to a leadership role in improving Australia's health system.

The views of interested health professionals, community members, researchers, academics, students, and policy workers will be welcome at the Summit.

Registration: <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>

Assistance with travel and accommodation bookings: Travel Makers 02 6247 4444

AHCRA is an independent coalition of organisations interested in improving health outcomes for people, irrespective of their financial means, ethnicity or location. Its operations are funded by its member contributions. The Department of Health and Ageing has provided assistance for the July Summit.

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