

NRHA eforum 8 June 2007 - Article

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum 8 June 2007

In this issue:

- * After forty years, surely it's time
- * News from the Alliance: May 2007
- * AMA Calls for Indigenous Health in COAG
- * Multidisciplinary Management of Chronic Disease - Rural Health Education Foundation satellite broadcast - Tuesday 12th June 2007
- * Labor's Indigenous Health Plan
- * Productivity Commission Report on Indicators of Indigenous Disadvantage
- * Rural Health in the Queensland Budget
- * Older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: A snapshot, 2004-05
- * Mapping of cardiac rehabilitation services for Indigenous Australians
- * Rural and Remote Families - the Ones to Suffer
- * The LIME Connection II "Cultures across the Indigenous health spectrum: achieving better outcomes"
- * New articles in Rural and Remote Health
- * Self-assessed Health in Australia: A Snapshot, 2004-05
- * More Training for Regional Proceduralists
- * Rural Health on the ABC
- * AMA Calls for Better Deal for Country Patients
- * What's On
- * Contribution and subscription information and disclaimer
- * Full text of After forty years, surely it's time

+++++

AFTER FORTY YEARS, SURELY IT'S TIME

The quest for equality is still before us, and was re-affirmed yet again by delegates at the 9th National Rural Health Conference in Albury. Conference endorsed the development of a rural action plan for equal health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within a generation. The Alliance will continue to do all it can, led by its Indigenous organisations, to help meet the expectations of 40 years ago (and still today). The full text of the NRHA statement is at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/media/indigenous%2040th%2027%20may.pdf> and is repeated below.

+++++

NEWS FROM THE ALLIANCE: MAY 2007

Partyline No 30

The latest edition of Partyline is now available on our website at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/publications/?IntContId=57&IntCatId=6>

It carries a lead article on health reform, responses to the 2007 Federal Budget, and stories and pictures from the 9th Conference - as well as other rural health news and information on resources.

For those who have elected to receive Partyline in hard copy it will be in the mail next week.

Conference Recommendations

The Conference Communique and Recommendations have been widely circulated and are available on our website at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au> The Alliance will continue to work on those recommendations it can and we hope that you will also work towards any of the recommendations that are relevant to your area of work.

Conference Proceedings

The 9th Conference Proceedings will be published on the updated 'Rural and Remote Health Papers 1991-2007' CD which will be available soon.

The CD will be sent to all Conference delegates and financial members of *friends* of the Alliance. If you are not a *friend* and didn't attend the Conference but would like to receive a copy you can find a friends membership form on our website at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/friends/?IntCatId=4>

Conference Keynotes

Papers, audio files and transcripts of Keynote Speakers are now available on our website at: <http://9thnrhc.ruralhealth.org.au/keynotes/?IntCatId=15>

Health Equality in a generation: a rural action plan

Presentations from this Seminar are available on our website at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/seminars/?IntCatId=18>

AJRH Writing to Publication Seminar

Presentations, audio files and transcripts from the Writing for Publication Seminar are available on our website at <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/ajrh/?IntContId=170&IntCatId=20> If you do not have internet access and would prefer to receive it on CD send your postal address to leanne@ruralhealth.org.au and we'll put one in the post to you.

Health Reform Summit

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. For more information go to AHCRA's website at <http://www.healthreform.org.au>

+++++

AMA CALLS FOR INDIGENOUS HEALTH IN COAG

AMA President, Dr Rosanna Capolingua, called on the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to make the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people its number one priority. Doctors from all over Australia, representing all medical specialties, have signed a petition calling on COAG to close the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and other Australians.

The full text of the AMA statement is at <http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-73M6XF>

+++++

From: Don Perlgut
Subject: Multidisciplinary Management of Chronic Disease - Rural Health Education
Foundation satellite broadcast - Tuesday 12th June 2007

LIVE Satellite Television Broadcast
Tuesday 12th June 8pm EST, (repeated Friday 15th June 12:30pm EST)

Program Information |
Satellite Site Locations
| RSVP

In Australia chronic diseases are accountable for 80 percent of the total burden of disease, mental health and injury. While usually not immediately life threatening, chronic diseases are the leading causes of premature mortality. Chronic disease is complex; causes can include cardiovascular disease, asthma, arthritis and musculoskeletal disorders, diabetes, renal disease and cancer. Onset of chronic disease may be slow, even though it can also manifest with acute episodes.

Permanent effects on the body, development of co-morbidities (eg depression) and disruption to an individual's quality of life can all be attributed to of chronic disease. In the face of the difficulties of preventing and managing chronic disease, a collaborative multidisciplinary approach provides significant opportunities. Unfortunately, there are also significant barriers to multidisciplinary care in rural and remote areas with limited human resources.

Through a series of case studies, this program explores the principles of prevention and multidisciplinary management of chronic disease and the practical application in rural and remote health services. Specific areas of discussion include early intervention and identification of risk factors, effective management of people already diagnosed with a chronic disease, the concept of self management, barriers to multidisciplinary care and potential solutions.

At the end of the program, viewers will be able to:

- * Outline the principles of multidisciplinary management of chronic disease.
- * Understand the role of Chronic Disease Management Medicare items as enablers of effective multidisciplinary team care.
- * Examine early intervention and opportunities to reduce risk chronic disease.
- * Identify strategies for embedding chronic disease self management in communities and individuals.
- * Discuss barriers to multidisciplinary care and strategies for isolated practitioners that help over come this.

Panellists include:

Chair: Dr Norman Swan, Presenter of the Health Report on ABC Radio National.
Dr Alan Cass, Head, Renal Program, The George Institute for International Health, Sydney NSW.

Ms Mary Filmer, Remote Area Nurse, Nurse Manager, Cann Valley Bush Nursing Centre VIC.

Mr Peter Quin, Social Worker, Director of Community Services, Orbost Regional Health VIC.

Dr Geoff Chapman, Rural General Practitioner & Medical Director of the Division of General Practice, Tasmania.

This program will be broadcast LIVE on Tuesday 12th June on Channel 4 at:

- 8.00pm in ACT, NSW, TAS, VIC & QLD
- 7.30pm in SA & NT
- 6.00pm in WA (and repeated in WA on Channel 23 at 8.00pm)

Repeated on Friday 15th June on Channel 23 at:

- 12.30pm in ACT, NSW, VIC, TAS & QLD
- 12 noon in SA & NT
- 10.30am in WA

This program will be web streamed after the live broadcast and will also be available as a downloadable audio MP3 file. For more details visit the <http://www.rhef.com.au/programs/707/707.html> program page.

+++++

9TH NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

The National Rural Health Alliance has published on its website (<http://9thnrhc.ruralhealth.org.au/registration/?IntCatId=2>) the full set of 250 recommendations from delegates at the 9th National Rural Health Conference held in Albury in March.

Media Statements from the Conference are as follows:

- * From the 9th Conference: plans for rural and remote health - http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/media/9th%20conf_plans%20for%20rr%20health%2015%20march.pdf
- * 9th Conference: the rural health sector recommits to action - <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/media/conference%20media%20with%20communique%20and%20recs%2015%20march.pdf>
- * Good health - not just about giving up smoking and taking up exercise - http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/media/good%20health%20_%20smoking%20and%20exercise.pdf
- * Top Performers in Rural Health Care Honoured - <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/media/top%20rural%20health%20performers%20%20honoured.pdf>
- * Grumpy old men perform secret men's business - and more - in Men's Sheds - <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/media/grumpy%20old%20men.pdf>
- * Country Australians deserve an equal share in Australia's wealth - <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/media/8%20march%20country%20australians%20deserve%20equal%20share.pdf>
- * Health Reform, Health Professionals and Service Planning - <http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/media/070307%20health%20reform%20health%200professionals%20day%202%20%207%20march%20071.pdf>

* Rural Health - It's All Happening in Albury at opening of 9th National Rural Health Conference -
<http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/media/070307%20media%20notification%207%20%20march%20nrh%20conference.pdf>

+++++

LABOR'S INDIGENOUS HEALTH PLAN

In the fortieth year since the passing of the 1967 Referendum, a Rudd Labor Government will commit to closing the 17-year gap life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people within a generation, ALP Health spokesperson Nicola Roxon has announced.

As part of this commitment, Labor will invest \$92 million in comprehensive Indigenous child and maternal health services. As a result of this initiative, Indigenous women will have access to proper antenatal care, practical advice on parenting, breastfeeding and nutrition for their babies, and home visit services for new Indigenous mothers and children aged 0-8 years, along with the States and Territories.

Labor will invest \$10 million in tackling rheumatic fever in Indigenous kids - a condition almost unknown outside the third world. Labor will provide \$10 million for accommodation services for Indigenous women if they're travelling from remote to urban and regional centres to have their babies. Further, State and Territory governments will be asked to provide funding of \$75 million to help achieve these goals.

The full text of Ms Roxon's statement is at <http://www.alp.org.au/media/0507/mshea260.php>

The AMA welcomed Labor's downpayment on a promise to bridge the 17-year gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. "It's admirable that Opposition Leader Kevin Rudd has committed to closing the gap if his party wins Government," The AMA statement is at <http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-73M2AB>

+++++

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

- * Establishing a rural academic infrastructure for individual health professions
- * Growing old and getting sick: Maintaining a positive spirit at the end of life
- * Building sustainable rural research capacity: The experiences of a brain injury rehabilitation service

- * Evaluation of the national pharmacy preceptor education program
- * Can a rural community-based work-related activity program make a difference for chronic pain-disabled injured workers?
- * Benefits and challenges of providing transitional rehabilitation services to people with spinal cord injury from regional, rural and remote locations
- * Junior medical officer recruitment: Challenges and lessons from the Northern Territory
- * Diagnosing dementia in rural New South Wales
- * Trends in private dental service provision in major city and other Australian locations
- * Australian rural adolescents' experiences of accessing psychological help for a mental health problem
- * Depression and remoteness from health services in South Australia
- * Prevalence of depression among adults in Oyo State, Nigeria: A comparative study of rural and urban communities
- * Short Reports
- * Grazings
- * From the Journal Associates

+++++

PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION REPORT ON INDICATORS OF INDIGENOUS DISADVANTAGE

The third in the series of reports *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators* was released by the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision. The publication is a report card on the COAG objective to closing the outcomes gap between Indigenous people and other Australians over a generation. The Committee said the positive news is that many Indigenous people have shared in Australia's recent economic prosperity, with improved employment outcomes and higher incomes. There have also been improvements in some education and health outcomes for Indigenous children. Yet, even where improvements have occurred, Indigenous people continue to do worse than other Australians. Many indicators show little or no improvement, the Committee said. Indeed, in some key areas, outcomes for Indigenous people have been deteriorating. Across virtually all the indicators in the Report, wide gaps remain in outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Despite Australia's world class health system, the life expectancy of Indigenous people is estimated to be around 17 years lower than that for the total Australian population. Despite compulsory education, Indigenous students at all levels experience much worse outcomes than non-Indigenous students. And Indigenous people are significantly over-represented in the criminal justice system, as both victims and offenders. The full report is available at <http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/indigenous/keyindicators2007/overview/>

The Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Mal Brough, said the Government would closely examine the findings from the report, but he was encouraged by the fact far more Indigenous Australians were finding work. He said there were a lot of positives in the report, there were other areas of great concern. His statement is at http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/minister3.nsf/content/productivity_1jun07.htm

The Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs & Reconciliation, Jenny Macklin, and the Shadow Minister for Health, Nicola Roxon, said Indigenous health has worsened under the Howard Government. "The Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Mal Brough, today took no responsibility for the Government's failure to provide basic health services. Instead he blamed

ATSIC. We've got news for Mr. Brough - Indigenous health was transferred from ATSIC to the Department of Health in 1995," they said. Their statement is at <http://www.alp.org.au/media/0607/msheaia010.php>

+++++

RURAL HEALTH IN THE QUEENSLAND BUDGET

The Queensland Budget has provided a boost for medicine in the bush with an injection of funds for the Royal Flying Doctor Service and more doctors who specialise in rural practice.

Premier Peter Beattie said the Queensland government would increase its annual funding to the Royal Flying Doctor Service by almost 80 per cent a year - from \$16.5 million to \$29.3 million. The government will also provide an extra \$18.3 million over four years to fund five more 'rural generalist' positions in 07-08 with more positions funded in the following years," Mr Beattie said.

Details of the Queensland State Budget are at <http://www.budget.qld.gov.au/>

+++++

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.

+++++

OLDER ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE: A SNAPSHOT, 2004-05 (ABS Cat 4722.0.55.002)

In the 2004-05 NATSIHS, 18% of Indigenous people aged 55 years and over reported their health as either very good or excellent, 32% reported their health as good and 50% reported their health as fair or poor. Older Indigenous people were almost three times as likely as Indigenous people aged 15-54 years to report their health as fair or poor (50% compared with 18%).

In all age groups, Indigenous people were more likely than non-Indigenous people to report their health as fair or poor. Among Australians aged 55 years and over, Indigenous people were more than one-and-a-half times as likely as non-Indigenous people to report their health as fair or poor (50% compared with 29%).

Details are at

<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/ProductsbyCatalogue/8B88352C0716C01ECA2572E900183042?OpenDocument>

+++++

MAPPING OF CARDIAC REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has released a cardiac geographic information system CD-ROM that not only locates cardiac rehabilitation services for Indigenous Australians across Australia, but also aids understanding of the distribution of cardiac illness in local areas. Further information is at http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/news/media/rel07/gis_cardiac.htm

+++++

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.

+++++

RURAL AND REMOTE FAMILIES - THE ONES TO SUFFER

It's the families living in rural and remote areas that will be the ones to suffer under the plans by the Commonwealth Government that will allow doctors, who do not have to have obstetric training, to claim Medicare when nurses, who do not have midwifery training, provide antenatal on their behalf, according to the Council of Remote Nurses. The full text of the CRANA statement is at http://www.crana.org.au/n_d.php?ID=141

+++++

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>

+++++

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>

+++++

NEW ARTICLES IN RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH

'Medical students' perceptions of barriers to training at a rural clinical school'

This article adds to the body of literature that suggests encouraging students to move to a rural area for a 12 month period is a challenge, even in Victoria, Australia, where "rural" is only a 2 hour drive from the heart of Melbourne, the state capital. These results from Melbourne University Rural Clinical School students speak for themselves. A time may come when such studies are not needed, but until then, this article provides valuable insights as to what prospective RCS students are looking for.

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=685>

'A required rural health module increases students' interest in rural health careers '

Is a compulsory undergraduate rural attachment a strategic way to encourage interest in rural medical practice? This article from Australia raises some interesting questions.

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=688>

'Evaluating Australian Indigenous community health promotion initiatives: a selective review'
Increasingly health promotion initiatives targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

people are being evaluated. In this timely paper the authors review 21 recent evaluations. Their findings provide a valuable blueprint for improving the ethical conduct and impact of future evaluations. A "must read" for everyone working with the Indigenous in every nation. <http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=746>

'An English medical student's perspective on rural New South Wales, Australia'
Often students perceive differences in health practice and express themselves quite eloquently. This English medical student, on an elective, discovered the charm and challenges of practising obstetrics in Armidale, a rural town of just over 20,000 population, located in the New England region of northern New South Wales, Australia. <http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=793>

+++++

SELF-ASSESSED HEALTH IN AUSTRALIA: A SNAPSHOT, 2004-05 (ABS 4828.0.55.001)

In 2004-05, 43% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians aged 15 years and over assessed their health as very good or excellent and 22% as fair or poor. After taking into account age differences between the populations, Indigenous people were almost twice as likely as non-Indigenous people to report fair or poor health. Details are at <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/ProductsbyCatalogue/45C7BE0C46424168CA256F0800778015?OpenDocument>

+++++

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>

+++++

MORE TRAINING FOR REGIONAL PROCEDURALISTS

The Commonwealth Government has increased training support to procedural GPs practising in some metropolitan and regional areas.

The increased assistance will be available as part of the Training for Rural and Remote Procedural GPs Program. Rural and remote GPs who do procedural work that specialists carry out in urban areas can access a grant of up to \$20,000 per GP, per financial year for the cost of up to ten days training, including the cost of locum relief.

From 30 May, the program will be made available to procedural GPs practising in surgery, anaesthetics and/or obstetrics and whose work is rural in nature even though they are based in locations such as Townsville, Gold Coast, Newcastle, Wollongong, Geelong and Queanbeyan.

The full text of the statement by Health Minister Tony Abbott is at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr07-ta-abb062.htm>

AMA President, Dr Rosanna Capolingua, welcomed the Government's increased training support for procedural GPs, which was a key recommendation from the AMA's recent Rural Health Issues Survey. "While very welcome, the extra support for proceduralists is still only part of the solution for rural health," Dr Capolingua said. "The States have to stop closing country hospitals and downgrading services in the bush before country doctors have nowhere left to practise their skills. The AMA statement is at <http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-73Q3XL>

+++++

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>)

The Federal Health Minister, Tony Abbott, says the Australian Medical Association (AMA) should give the Government credit for the work it has done on Indigenous health. The AMA has petitioned state and federal governments to make the issue their top priority and the association's new president says the 17-year life expectancy difference between Indigenous Australians and the rest of the community is unacceptable. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200705/s1935159.htm>

Aboriginal homelands

Helen Hughes in her new book *Lands of Shame* points to the dire situation many Aborigines face living in remote communities. She believes that much of the blame rests with policies that treat Aborigines differently from other Australians. Also discussing Indigenous health is Dr David Scrimgeour, who has lived and worked in these remote communities for many years. <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/counterpoint/stories/2007/1935001.htm>

+++++

AMA CALLS FOR BETTER DEAL FOR COUNTRY PATIENTS

AMA President, Dr Rosanna Capolingua, has said that rural and regional patients are getting a raw deal from poorly funded and badly targeted patient assisted travel schemes. "They need better funding so that the costs of travel and reasonable accommodation are properly compensated. There also needs to be better recognition of the special cultural needs of Indigenous patients so they can take greater advantage of these schemes.

"The AMA is also recommending an expansion of PATS to cover other treatments available under the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS), including access to allied health where the care is coordinated by a doctor," Dr Capolingua said.

The AMA statement is at <http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-73Q43H> and the AMA Submission to the Senate PATS inquiry is at [http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-73P7LJ/\\$file/AMA_Submission_on_Patient_Assisted_Travel_Schemes.pdf](http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-73P7LJ/$file/AMA_Submission_on_Patient_Assisted_Travel_Schemes.pdf)

Meanwhile, the Rural Doctors Association submission to the Senate inquiry is available at http://www.rdaa.com.au/uploaded_documents/Submission%20--%20Patient%20Assisted%20Travel%20Schemes%20--%20May%202007.pdf

+++++

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/>

+++++

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. Special 'early' registration rates are available up to 15 June 2007.

Further info is available on the conference website <http://www.ruralcriticalcare.asn.au>

+++++

From: Joy Burch
Subject: FW: 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/>

Joy Burch
Executive Officer
Australian Rural Health Education Network
PO Box 242 Deakin West. ACT 2600
Phone: 02 6282 2166
Mobile: 0419 460 820
Fax: 02 6282 9166
email: joy.burch@arhen.org.au
web: <http://www.arhen.org.au>
journal: <http://www.rrh.org.au>

+++++

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>

+++++

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

+++++

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

Details are at <http://www.nswrahc.com>. The call for abstracts is now open. Feel free to contact me to discuss.

+++++

From: Kate Morrison sjp@unsw.edu.au
Subject: Anti-Poverty Week

The main aim of Anti-Poverty Week (14th - 20th October) is to raise awareness of poverty and hardship around the world and within Australia.

Poverty and severe hardship affect more than a million Australians. Around the world more than a billion people are desperately poor. In Anti-Poverty Week help fight poverty and hardship.

Why not organise a display, stall or award? Maybe a workshop, lecture or forum? How about a fundraiser, fact sheet or petition? For more information and ideas, visit <http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au>, email apw@antipovertyweek.org.au or call 1300 797 290.

Kate Morrison
National Coordinator
Anti-Poverty Week 2007

1300-797-290
apw@antipovertyweek.org.au
<http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au>

+++++

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. Closing date for abstracts is 15 June.

Further information on the conference website: <http://www.rmhconference.com> or by contacting info@eastcoastconferences.com.au, tel 02 6650 9800.

+++++

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.

+++++

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.

+++++

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.

As well as an exciting range of speakers, this congress will have major trade displays for companies and products which will have a significant future role in addressing governmental and individual lifestyle responses to environmental and nutritional issues.

The Population health Congress 2008 will be held on July 7-9 in the Brisbane Convention and exhibition Centre - one of Australia's best conference venues.

Regular updates on Congress 2008 will be available at <http://www.populationhealthcongress.org.au> log on to register your interest.

Enquiries:
Conference Coordinators
PO Box 139
Calwe ll ACt 2905
Ph (02) 6292 9000
congress2008@confco.com.au

+++++

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.

+++++

Media Release
26 May 2007

After forty years, surely it's time

Events all over the nation this weekend will commemorate the 40th anniversary of the national referendum on 27 May 1967 which empowered the Commonwealth Government to make laws that relate specifically to Aboriginal people and to include Aboriginal people in the national census. In the highest YES vote ever at a referendum - an unprecedented and overwhelming 90.7% - the Australian people declared their support for equality for all Australians.

The quest for equality is still before us, and was re-affirmed yet again by delegates at the 9th National Rural Health Conference in Albury. Conference endorsed the development of a rural action plan for equal health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within a generation. The Alliance will continue to do all it can, led by its Indigenous organisations, to help meet the expectations of 40 years ago (and still today).

The Conference covered health issues from climate change to workforce shortages; from health promotion to Commonwealth/State funding issues; and from the power of the arts for health to systemic, nationwide health policy reform. However, of the 270 recommendations generated from presented papers, no fewer than 41 related specifically to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Those 41 dealt with a wide range of issues, reminding us of the many fronts on which there must be action in order to achieve equal health for aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within a generation. Topics covered included:

- * infrastructure and housing
- * fresh, affordable food to be made available in Indigenous communities including through improved freighting and storage
- * improved health services per se
- * supported mental health interventions

- * research that complies with NHMRC guidelines and which involves Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in decision making
- * continued support for the Indigenous staff of University Departments of Rural Health
- * additional support for Aboriginal Health Workers, including more training opportunities
- * more programs to prepare Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for the workforce
- * cultural awareness training in the treatment and management of specific conditions among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including cancer and chronic disease
- * development of effective models of pharmacy practice for remote Indigenous communities, including flexible pharmacy provisions for Aboriginal health services
- * Indigenous experts to peer review competitive grants for Indigenous research
- * improvement of dental services for remote Indigenous communities
- * expansion of successful programs such as Strong Women, Strong Babies, Strong Culture
- * an increase for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the maximum number of visits eligible for subsidy under the Extended Primary Care items of Medicare
- * workshops for the provision of career advice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- * uniform reporting requirements and less red tape for Aboriginal Medical Services
- * programs for dental health promotion, early intervention programs and oral health promotion in Indigenous communities
- * continued support and training for GP registrars in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

John Wakerman, Chairperson of the Alliance, said that the Alliance's position on Indigenous health reflects the importance and urgency of the matter, as well as its complexity. "We do not shy away from the fact that, as a nation, we have failed to date to deliver the equality of opportunity that was reflected in the 1967 Referendum. There is still inequality in education, living conditions, representation in the professions, in Parliament, in the workforce, and in prison. In health, there is a horrendous 17 year life expectancy gap."

"The strongly-declared intent of the Australian people 40 years ago needs to be acted upon. It needs to be turned into effective and culturally appropriate policies. Australia is forty years late in making the kind of significant long-term investment in Indigenous health that will bring about meaningful results," Dr Wakerman said.

"So now is a good time to recommit - and the Alliance will do so, both through its promotion of policies and its internal activities. Our immediate work will include continued support for the Close the Gap campaign being led by NACCHO (one of our member bodies), Oxfam and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission."

[Click here to be removed from the mailing list](#)