

National Rural Health Alliance E-forum 3 April 2009

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March 2009 E-news from the NRHA

10th National Rural Health Conference  
17-20 May 2009, Cairns

The 10th National Rural Health Conference represents a significant milestone for the rural and remote health community. The Conference MC is Robyn Williams from Radio National's Science Show.

Don't miss these plenary highlights at the Conference:

- \* Maggie Grant and Vicki Saunders on supporting the Indigenous health workforce
- \* Ruth Ballweg, Director of the University of Washington Physician Assistants Training Program, on the rural potential of emerging professions
- \* Michael Raper on Red Cross's work in rural, remote and Indigenous communities and with some reflections on the aftermath of the Victorian bushfires
- \* an update on maternity services from the Department of Health and Ageing
- \* Fred Chaney, John Wakerman and a team from the Katherine West Health Board exploring the special challenges of providing services in remote areas
- \* Peter Fleming on e-health, and Monique Begin and Fran Baum on the political and social determinants of health
- \* a panel session on workforce reform and Tony Hobbs on a strategic approach to primary care
- \* Christine Bennett's update on work of the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission
- \* Janine Watts reflecting on how a Director of Nursing gets involved in stand-up comedy.

Over 100 papers will be presented in the concurrent sessions on topics such as recruitment and retention, drought and drying, mental health, infrastructure, rural education, primary care, community consultation, diabetes, men's health and climate change. There will be a session on lessons from the Northern Territory Emergency Response, a special stream on rural cancer services, and a symposium on the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health. As at other National Rural Health Conferences, the 10th will engage delegates in developing recommendations to help raise the profile of rural issues that are important to them, and to contribute to setting the future agenda for health organisations, educational institutions, governments and other policy makers.

The Conference is also an occasion for celebrating successes in the rural health sector and acknowledging people who have made significant contributions to improving rural health. The winners of the *Des Murray Scholarship* and the *Louis Ariotti Memorial Award* will be announced. Other awards to be presented are the Toowoomba Hospital Foundation's *Rural Health Research Awards* and the friends of the Alliance *Unsung Hero Award*. Delegates will also be invited to vote for the winners of the *friends* Photo and Poetry Competition.

And if that isn't enough, you can bring your musical instrument and your voice to be part of the 10th Conference orchestra and choir. Don't be shy - we know you're not.

The full program and lots of other information is available on the Conference website through <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>

Travel Makers can help with all your travel and accommodation needs and have urged delegates to book soon to avoid disappointment. You can contact Travel Makers on 1800 838 408 or visit their website at <http://www.travelmakers.com.au> for more information.

#### Pre-Conference Workshops

There are currently five pre-Conference events being held on Sunday 17 May:

- \* the place to be....a community skills workshop
- \* the AJRH Writing for Publication Workshop
- \* Keeping safe in rural and remote Australia - what does this mean? - a symposium for health and other female professionals
- \* Blood-borne Viruses and STIs for GPs, nurses and allied health - Australian Society for HIV Medicine one-day course
- \* NACCHO Aboriginal Primary Health Care Business Workshop.

Programs for these pre-Conference events can be found on the 10th Conference website. You can register for the pre-Conference events when you register for the 10th Conference online or in hardcopy. You can also register for a pre-Conference event, without attending the 10th Conference, by using the 10th Conference registration process.

#### *friends* Photography and Poetry Competition

*friends* are invited to enter by submitting entries about life in rural and remote Australia. First prize in each category will be \$500. Closing date extended to 17 April! Further information and entry form at

[http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/friends/docs/ppc2009/friends\\_ppc\\_entry\\_form\\_2009.pdf](http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/friends/docs/ppc2009/friends_ppc_entry_form_2009.pdf)

#### *friends* Unsung Hero Award: Nominate someone now!

The purpose of the *friends* Unsung Hero Award is to recognise these grassroots people who have made a significant contribution to the health of their remote, Indigenous or rural community. Nominations close 17 April 2009.

[http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/friends/docs/uha2009/uha\\_entry\\_form\\_2009.pdf](http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/friends/docs/uha2009/uha_entry_form_2009.pdf)

Key policy work: men's health

The Alliance's Submission to the Senate Select Committee on Men's Health is now available on both the Senate's website and on the Alliance's. The Alliance and HCRRA jointly presented evidence on their submissions to the Select Committee.

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## CLIMATE CHANGE A FACTOR IN POOR HEALTH OF RURAL MEN

The Senate Select Committee on Men's Health has been told that a range of issues - including climate change and the inability to readily access health services in the bush - is contributing to the continued poor state of health of Australian men who live in rural and remote areas.

The full text of the Alliance statement is at [http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/mediareleases/nrha\\_mr\\_27-03-09.pdf](http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/cms/uploads/mediareleases/nrha_mr_27-03-09.pdf) and is reproduced below.

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From: Nicole Gemmell  
Subject: Calling all Rural Pharmacists in Australia

The services provided by rural and remote pharmacists are vital to the health and well-being of their communities. Yet despite multiple incentive programs, the shortage of pharmacists in rural and remote Australia continues to be a major problem.

As a result RhED Consulting Pty Ltd, commissioned by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, is undertaking a landmark Australian national rural research project on rural workforce issues specific to pharmacy.

Our aim is to understand what fulfils and motivates a pharmacist to work and stay in rural practice so we can ensure rural Australians continue to receive the best access to pharmacists and the services they provide.

If you are a rural pharmacist or pharmacy student, please help by filling out a short survey and/or participating in a focus group or interview. Visit <http://www.rhed.com.au/pharmacy> for more details or to access surveys online, or contact Dr Janie Smith, Director of RhED Consulting Pty Ltd at [janie.smith@rhed.com.au](mailto:janie.smith@rhed.com.au) / (02) 6680 3998.

Nicole Gemmell  
Director, GeMM Enterprises  
M: 0416 071 900

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From: [jayne.lkaeland@racp.edu.au](mailto:jayne.lkaeland@racp.edu.au)  
Subject: Rural and Remote videoconference: "Cultural Security" An Indigenous Perspective

Rural & Remote videoconference: "Cultural Security" A Indigenous Perspective. RACP, AFRM

Date: 29th May 2009 Time: 2.00pm (Darwin Time)  
Base Site: Royal Darwin Hospital  
Open to all Rehabilitation Specialists, students, trainees.

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Partyline #35 is now on-line at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>. It is a special edition highlighting the key events and activities of the forthcoming 10<sup>th</sup> National Rural Health Conference in Cairns. The Conference will run from 17-20 May. Partyline 35 contains information on speakers, concurrent sessions, pre-conference workshops and networking opportunities for *friends* of the Alliance. There is news about the *Community skills workshop* to be held on Sunday 17 May before the Conference begins.

Partyline 35 was produced in collaboration with *beyondblue* - the national depression initiative, and contains a double-page spread on addressing the psychological aftermath of a bushfire or other natural disasters, and ways to cope psychologically with the economic downturn.

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From: Alan Staines  
Subject: 2nd Australian Postvention Conference

As Chair of the Conference Organising Committee and Director of The Salvation Army Hope for Life Program - I invite you to attend and participate at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Postvention conference that is being held at the Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre commencing Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> - Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2009.

The conference "Connectedness - A Link to Hope" provides a wonderful opportunity for delegates throughout Australia and New Zealand to network and share together their experience and knowledge.

We are privileged to have international guests and invited Australian speakers who are well known in Australia and internationally for their research and practice in postvention. International and Australian presenters include Prof Ian Webster, Prof Graham Martin, Dr Judith Murray, Dr Sheila Clark, Dr Frank Campbell, Dr Michelle Linn-Gust, Dr Kari Dyregrov, Dr Scott Poland, Prof Onja Grad and Darrell Henry (indigenous psychologist).

The conference will bring together family and friends who have been bereaved by suicide; the indigenous, teachers, youth workers, social workers, mental health professionals, general practitioners and medical personnel, clergy, emergency services personnel, researchers, service providers and funeral service personnel.

The Postvention Conference Healing and Remembrance Ceremony will be held on Saturday afternoon. The Ceremony is a unique event that is the heart of the conference and provides an opportunity for individuals, families, friends and conference delegates to come together in strength, light and community to share and be supported in our grief as we honour and remember our loved ones and connect through Living Hope.

For further information conference program registration and call for abstracts, visit

conference manager's website at <http://www.hotelnetwork.com.au> and <http://www.suicideprevention.salvos.org.au>

Alan Staines, OAM (Envoy)  
Director, The Salvation Army Suicide Prevention - Bereavement Support Services

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*friends* Photography and Poetry Competition and *friends* Unsung Hero Award

In conjunction with the 10<sup>th</sup> National Rural Health Conference, *friends* of the Alliance is holding an amateur photography and poetry competition to highlight life in rural and remote Australia. *friends* are invited to enter by submitting entries about rural people at work or play; capturing the unique feel of life in rural/remote Australia; vibrant rural communities; the advantages of living outside a capital city; description of the beauty and reality of life in rural/remote Australia; healthy rural lifestyles; or any rural or remote theme. First prize in each category will be \$500. Further information and an entry form is available at [http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/friends/docs/ppc2009/friends\\_ppc\\_entry\\_form\\_2009.pdf](http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/friends/docs/ppc2009/friends_ppc_entry_form_2009.pdf)

There are many people who work tirelessly for their rural or remote communities and contribute greatly on issues about which they are passionate. Rural and remote communities are much richer for their contribution, yet we often don't know who they are. They might be the quiet achiever, the volunteer, or the worker who constantly goes above and beyond their normal role to contribute to their community. The purpose of the *friends* Unsung Hero Award is to recognise these grassroots people who have made a significant contribution to the health of their remote, Indigenous or rural community. Nominations close 17 April 2009. Further information and an entry form are available at [http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/friends/docs/uha2009/uha\\_entry\\_form\\_2009.pdf](http://nrha.ruralhealth.org.au/friends/docs/uha2009/uha_entry_form_2009.pdf)

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10th NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 17-20 May 2009, Cairns, Qld

The 10th biennial National Rural Health Conference, to be held at the Cairns Convention Centre from 17-20 May, will seek to identify how people living in rural and remote areas are coping with the threats and opportunities they face. It will highlight both the serious challenges those people face and their resilience at a time when ecological issues remain serious and when the fiscal and financial environment has changed beyond recognition.

Promoting Cairns as "The Place to Be" the organisers have been under pressure to fit into the program the many threads, topics and research reports which this biennial event brings together. The result is a program rich in content and variety that is now accessible at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>

The packed program will feature 18 keynote addresses from leaders in the health sector, as well as researchers and political identities. About 120 of more than 350 papers submitted for consideration will be delivered in concurrent sessions, interspersed with eight lengthier participatory workshops. Workshop topics include the role of the health sector in mitigating the effects of climate change; setting an Australian rural ethics agenda; and drought, drying and rural mental health. There will be a strong arts-in-health stream, with the North

Queensland organisation Arts Nexus curating events.

The previous two biennial conferences each attracted more than 1,000 delegates and the organisers, led by the NRHA, are expecting similar registration numbers. "It's good to have the Conference back in Queensland after 18 years away and even better to have it in North Queensland - the first time in the tropics," said Atherton-based physiotherapist and conference convenor, Owen Allen. "We'll roll out a warm welcome and then get down to the serious business of making sure that the political change underway in the health sector provides some of the answers we've been looking for in rural and remote areas," Mr Allen said.

Further Contact: Lyn Eiszlele - Conference Manager: (02) 6285 4660 Marshall Wilson - Media: 0419 664 155 <http://www.ruralhealth.org.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](mailto:melbourne@johnwiley.com.au)

April 2009 issue now available. Contents include:

Editorial - Making good research useful: Another step on the journey

Original Articles

Four years after graduation: Occupational therapists' work destinations and perceptions of preparedness for practice

Workers compensation and occupational health and safety in the Australian agricultural industry

Health behaviours of young, rural residents: A case study

Gender, socioeconomic status, need or access? Differences in statin prescribing across urban, rural and remote Australia

Generational attitudes of rural mental health nurses

Need for syphilis screening and counselling in HIV counselling and testing centres: A curtain raiser study from north India

Short Reports

Factors influencing the practice choices of Australian medical students: A feasibility study

Meeting rehabilitation service needs in rural and remote Australia: A focus group workshop with rehabilitation service health care providers

Grazings

PHC RIS: Practice nurses - Enhancing primary health care services in rural Australia

Life and ageism

Book Review - A Textbook of Rural Health

From the Journal Associates  
Wide-ranging policy work at the National Rural Health Alliance  
ARNM: Merger between the Australian Rural Nurses and Midwives and Royal College of Nursing, Australia

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

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RHEF UPCOMING PROGRAMS (From <http://www.rhef.com.au/upcoming-programs/>)

- Tue 14 April 8 pm RPT 820: Sleep and Health: A Wake-up Call Channel 23
- Fri 17 Apr 12.30 pm RPT 820: Sleep and Health: A Wake-up Call Channel 23
- Tue 28 Apr 8 pm 907: Helping Children With Autism Channel 4
- Fri 1 May 12.30 pm 907: Helping Children With Autism Channel 23
- Tue 12 May 8 pm 910a: Caring for Women with Ovarian Cancer, Part 1 Channel 4
- Fri 15 May 12.30 pm 910a: Caring for Women with Ovarian Cancer, Part 1 Channel 23
- Tue 26 May 8 pm 908: Mulling It Over: Cannabis Intervention in Primary Health Care Channel 4
- Fri 29 May 12.30 pm 908: Mulling It Over: Cannabis Intervention in Primary Health Care Channel 23
- Tue 9 Jun 8 pm 909: Women in General Practice Channel 4
- Fri 12 Jun 12.30 pm 909: Women in General Practice Channel 23
- Tue 16 Jun 8 pm 910b: Caring for Women with Ovarian Cancer, Part 2 Channel 4
- Fri 19 Jun 12.30 pm 910b: Caring for Women with Ovarian Cancer, Part 2 Channel 23

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DIABETES IN THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POPULATION, 2004-05  
(ABS Cat 4724.0.55.001)

After adjusting for age differences of the two population structures, Indigenous people were three times more likely to be living with diabetes than non-Indigenous people. There were also similar differences in the rate of the disease depending on where Indigenous and non-Indigenous people lived.

<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4724.0.55.001Main%20Features52004-05>

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POLICY NEWS

Some reflections on the quality of administrative data for Indigenous Australians: The importance of knowing something about the unknown(s)

[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename\\_num=271801](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=271801)

Boyd Hunter and Aarthi Ayyar / Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research  
Analysis of the Repeat Offenders Database collated by the New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research shows that the Indigenous population of offenders are substantially undercounted in administrative data collections.

Towards a gender-related index for Indigenous Australians

[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename\\_num=271798](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=271798)

Mandy Yap and Nicholas Biddle / Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research

There has been extensive research into the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous outcomes but very little of this has adopted a gender perspective.

Closing the gap - targets for indicator diseases

[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename\\_num=271189](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=271189)

Stephanie Davis / Department of Health and Families, NT Government

This article discusses the clear gap between the rates at which Indigenous and non-Indigenous people suffer from communicable diseases.

Brokering successful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes: common themes in good-practice models

Kristine Giddy, Jessica Lopez and Anne Redman / National Centre for Vocational Education Research

This report and accompanying guide describe seven essential characteristics of employment service organisations that lead to successful employment outcomes for their Indigenous clients

[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename\\_num=270779](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=270779)

Rural and remote health workforce capacity: the contribution made by programs administered by the Department of Health and Ageing

Australian National Audit Office

Over the last decade, Australia has experienced workforce shortages in a number of health professions, particularly in rural and remote regions. This report finds that the Department of Health and Ageing has not yet developed a cohesive approach to inform its strategies to deal with these shortages and to report on its contribution to health workforce outcomes in rural and remote areas of Australia

[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename\\_num=270081](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=270081)

Grasping the opportunity of Opal: assessing the impact of the Petrol Sniffing Strategy

Senate Community Affairs Committee

This report reviews initiatives since 2006 to combat petrol sniffing in remote communities and makes a series of recommendations for further action

[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename\\_num=270068](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=270068)

Beyond closing the gap: valuing diversity in Indigenous Australia

Jon Altman / Centre for Public Policy

This paper argues that the Federal Government's 'Closing the Gap' approach fails to value Indigenous difference and fails to accommodate Indigenous aspirations in all their diversity.

[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename\\_num=270048](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=270048)

International Group for Indigenous Health Measurement 2006, Canberra

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

The International Group for Indigenous Health Measurement works to collect, disseminate and use data related to indigenous health and this publication records the proceedings of their second meeting in November 2006.

[http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename\\_num=269722](http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=269722)

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Join *friends* of the Alliance now for 2009 and get discounted registration for the 10th Conference in Cairns in May. People who pay the *friends* fee after 1 September are members for the whole of the following calendar year. *friends* members will also receive the updated CD 'Rural and Remote Health Papers 1991-2009' (due out in late 2009), connection with the Alliance's policy work and regular issues of the *Partyline* newsletter. Above all, membership of *friends* gives you the opportunity to support the Alliance and its work. The *friends* Advisory Committee is: Alicia Eaton (Vic), John Ferguson (Qld), Jane Fisher (ACT), Janet Fletcher (NT), Pauline Glover (SA), Nigel Jefford (WA), Marie Lally (SA), Suzanne Little (Qld), Irene Mills (WA), Beth Smith (TAS), Janie Smith (NSW), Janet Struber (NT), David Templeman (ACT), David Thompson (Vic) and Robin Toohey (NSW). Members of the Committee are soon to elect a Chairperson, who will be a Member of the NRHA Council.

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### AUDIT OFFICE REPORT ON RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH WORKFORCE CAPACITY

Over the last decade, Australia has experienced workforce shortages in a number of health professions, particularly in rural and remote regions. The ongoing shortage of doctors and nurses in these areas of the country has many characteristics in common with difficult social policy issues - it is multi-causal with many interdependencies, has no clear or definitive solution, is not the responsibility of any one jurisdiction and, ultimately, requires health professionals to move to, or work for a longer period in, a rural and remote area. This report finds that the Department of Health and Ageing has not yet developed a cohesive approach to inform its strategies to deal with these shortages and to report on its contribution to health workforce outcomes in rural and remote areas of Australia.

The ANAO report is available at

[http://www.anao.gov.au/download.cfm?item\\_id=1C259BCF1560A6E8AAAA3D66C DFA9C5D&binary\\_id=1CEE267E1560A6E8AA56720216A29128](http://www.anao.gov.au/download.cfm?item_id=1C259BCF1560A6E8AAAA3D66C DFA9C5D&binary_id=1CEE267E1560A6E8AA56720216A29128)

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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](mailto:infoservice@lifeline.org.au) and <http://www.lifeline.org.au>

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### ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HOME OWNERSHIP: A SNAPSHOT, 2006 (ABS 4722.0.55.005)

In 2006 there were 158,600 households with at least one usual resident of Aboriginal and/or

Torres Strait Islander descent. Around one in eight Indigenous households (18,350 or 12%) owned their home outright (without a mortgage secured against the dwelling) and a further 38,650 (24%) owned their home with a mortgage. In comparison there were 6,778,800 non-Indigenous households; of which 2,412,350 (36%) were owned outright and 2,397,500 (35%) were owned with a mortgage.

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4722.0.55.005?OpenDocument>

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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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#### FUNDING BOOST FOR CHILD CARE IN RURAL AUSTRALIA

The Hon Maxine McKew MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Early Childhood Education and Child Care, has announced funding of more than \$900,000 for 14 child care services in rural and remote areas of Australia. The Australian Government has committed \$3 million over 3 years to assist Long Day Care services in rural and remote areas through the Long Day Care Capital Funding Program. The full text of Ms McKew's statement is at

<http://www.alp.org.au/media/0309/msece250.php>

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#### BUSH CRISIS LINE - 1800 805 391

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

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#### UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Speech of Hon Jenny Macklin, Indigenous Affairs Minister, available at

[http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/un\\_declaration\\_03apr09.htm](http://www.jennymacklin.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/jennymacklin.nsf/content/un_declaration_03apr09.htm)

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#### RURAL HEALTH ON THE ABC

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

Team effort needed to close the gap

More than 130,000 Australians have pledged their support for the 'Close the Gap' campaign, making it one of the most successful grassroots movements in Australia in recent times.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/04/02/2533177.htm>

Female professionals work on protection against violence from rural clients  
For the first time, female professionals in rural areas are working together to protect themselves from violence.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200904/s2532940.htm>

Scrap quarantining of indigenous welfare payments: nurses  
The Australian Nursing Federation is calling on the Federal Government to reinstate the Racial Discrimination Act and make quarantining of Indigenous welfare payments voluntary.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/04/02/2532887.htm>

Governor to open revamped flying doctor base  
New South Wales Governor Marie Bashir will open the redeveloped Royal Flying Doctor Service base in Broken Hill tomorrow morning.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/04/02/2532700.htm>

NT PETROL SNIFFING REHAB CENTRE UNDER THREAT (AM: 28/03/2009)

<http://abcmail.net.au/t/434928/614869/8567/0/>

WA Govt told to address Aboriginal 'suicide crisis'  
The Western Australian Government is being urged to help combat what an Aboriginal health group describes as a "suicide crisis".

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/03/25/2525770.htm>

Rural Australia short on health workers like osteos and chiropractors  
Rural allied health professionals are crying out for national data on shortages.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200903/s2527638.htm>

Audit reveals rural health information is out of date  
An audit has revealed that the Federal Health Department has been using 18-year-old census data as the basis for enticing doctors to work in rural and remote Australia.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200903/s2525651.htm>

Doctors' group fears rural obstetrics loss  
The Rural Doctors Association (RDA) has warned more towns in south-west Victoria could lose obstetrics services because of changes to federal funding for doctors.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/03/23/2523369.htm>

Rural areas could benefit from men's health policy

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200903/s2523399.htm>

Intervention moving into sustainable phase: Macklin  
The Rudd Government has released a report saying Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory have benefited from the federal intervention.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/03/22/2522917.htm>

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RDA NEWS

RDAAsubmission on the Primary Health Care Strategy

[http://www.rdaa.com.au/uploaded\\_documents/RDAAsubmission\\_20Primary%20care%20review%20su%20Mar%202009.pdf](http://www.rdaa.com.au/uploaded_documents/RDAAsubmission_20Primary%20care%20review%20su%20Mar%202009.pdf)

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#### AMA NEWS

Focus Needed on Health of Indigenous Children 2 April 2009

On Close the Gap Day, the AMA has urged governments to improve child health services in Indigenous communities.

<http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/topic/mediareleases>

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#### ARTICLES IN "RURAL AND REMOTE HEALTH"

'Factors influencing occupational therapy students' perceptions of rural and remote practice'  
Occupational therapists, like all health professionals, are in short supply in rural areas. This literature review echoes for OTs the lessons we have learned about the rural medical workforce and the potential positive impact of curriculum and rural placement.

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=1078>

'Reported reasons of medical students for choosing a clinical longitudinal integrated clerkship in an Australian rural clinical school'

Current rural clinical school students who have chosen to spend an exciting time during their clinical training in the bush are among the best advertisements for a career in rural Australia. This positive study might present a "rose tinted" view of life in the country as a Western Australian medical student, but it does provide more evidence and data to encourage future students to "go rural".

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=1093>

'An innovative model improving success at university for regional Australians suffering educational and social disadvantage'

To revitalise the ageing and depleted RN workforce in Australian rural areas, many recruitment strategies are required, including training people in their own community. This article shows how a regional university used an innovative workshop to convert 63% of potential nursing students into actual enrolments.

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=1128>

'Pandemic influenza containment and the cultural and social context of Indigenous communities'

Too often public health planning fails to address health inequalities. This review from Australia shows that worldwide strategies to prevent and address pandemic influenza disregard disadvantaged populations. For Indigenous Australians this neglect could be fatal because strategies fail to take into account community realities, including the impact of history.

<http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=1179>

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CURRENT ISSUE OF eMJA, 16 March 2009  
(Available at <http://www.mja.com.au/>)

From the Editor's Desk: Care and compassion  
Editorials

After the fires: looking to the future using the lessons from the past

Water recycling - forwards or backwards for public health?

The "alcopops" tax: heading in the right direction

Research

Incidence and survival after acute myocardial infarction in Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the Northern Territory, 1992-2004

Natural history of chronic kidney disease in Australian Indigenous and non-Indigenous children: a 4-year population-based follow-up study

Patterns of mortality in Indigenous adults in the Northern Territory, 1998-2003: are people living in more remote areas worse off?

Public Health

Are babies getting bigger? An analysis of birthweight trends in New South Wales, 1990-2005

Position Statement

Calcium and bone health: position statement for the Australian and New Zealand Bone and Mineral Society, Osteoporosis Australia and the Endocrine Society of Australia

Review

The benefits of oestrogen following menopause: why hormone replacement therapy should be offered to postmenopausal women

For Debate

Non-inferiority trials: determining whether alternative treatments are good enough

Lessons from Practice

Subclavian stenosis causing angina after coronary artery bypass grafting

Notable Cases

Clinical, electrophysiological and genetic features of a large Australian family with paramyotonia congenital

Letter - Homicide and rates of renal transplantation in the United States and Australia

Snapshot - Valsalva retinopathy induced by vigorous nightclub dancing

Correction - National mental health reform: less talk, more action

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Creative Communities: Sustainable Solutions to Social Inclusion  
15-17 April 2009 QLD

The Centre for Public Culture and Ideas, Griffith University, with support from the Innovative European Union Centre is hosting a three-day international conference. This conference is affiliated with Griffith University's Strategic Research Program on 'Social Change and Well-Being', and will feature contributions from academic researchers and practitioners from the Pacific Rim, the European Union, Asia and North America. The purpose of the conference is to provide a forum for the sharing of ideas and knowledge about the value of creativity as a means of engendering social inclusion.

<http://www.griffith.edu.au/arts-languages-criminology/centre-public-culture-ideas/news-events/creative-communities-conference>

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From: Nysha Thomas  
Subject: Consumer Research Forum

Cancer Council NSW will be conducting a Consumer Research Forum on Thursday 14th May 2009. The Forum will be held from 8:30am to 12noon in a Sydney CBD location. The aim of the forum is to identify an agreed set of NSW cancer consumer research priorities across the cancer control spectrum (from prevention through survivorship and bereavement). Involving consumers in research priority setting has been shown to support funding agencies to reconcile the different needs and agendas of researchers and the wider community, and to result in more balanced funding of pragmatic (research that directly addresses a relevant patient or health system need) and explanatory research.

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

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From: Al Parmeter  
Subject: Community Skills Workshop, Sunday 17 May 2009

The 10<sup>th</sup> National Rural Health Conference will be held in Cairns 17-20 May 2009. You can find everything you need to know about the Conference on the conference website at <http://www.ruralhealth.org.au>

As part of the Conference we are holding some pre-Conference events. One in particular that may interest you or your colleagues is the Community Skills Workshop. This workshop will provide delegates with a range of skills to use in their own communities.

The Workshop on the Sunday is free for 10<sup>th</sup> Conference delegates, students and those not in the paid workforce.

Registrations can be made online via the Conference website.

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National Palliative Care Week - 24 - 30 May 2009  
<http://www.palliativecare.org.au>

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9<sup>th</sup> WONCA RURAL HEALTH WORLD CONFERENCE

June 12-14, 2009  
Heraklion, Crete, Greece  
<http://www.ruralwonca2009.org/>

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National Motor Neurone Disease conference  
Sydney, June 23  
A limited amount of travel grants may be available for NSW registrants  
The website url is <http://www.mndnsw.asn.au/htmdocs/conference.htm>

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NAIDOC Week celebrations for 2009 will be held from 5 to 12 July. Further information at  
<http://www.naidoc.org.au/>

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General Practice & Primary Health Care Research Conference 2009: Driving Change  
15-17 July, Melbourne VIC  
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, form collaborations and network with speakers and other delegates.  
<http://www.phcris.org.au/conference/2009>

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Catholic Health Australia 2009 National Conference - Hand in Hand Hotel Grand Chancellor  
Hobart, 17 - 19 August 2009 <http://www.cha.org.au/>

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7<sup>th</sup> Australasian Conference on Safety and Quality in Health Care  
6-9 September 2009  
Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre  
Darling Harbour, Sydney  
  
<http://www.aaqhc2009.org.au>  
[aaqhc2009@tourhosts.com.au](mailto:aaqhc2009@tourhosts.com.au)

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Year of the Blood Donor 2009  
An anticipated doubling of demand for blood and blood products within 10 years has led the Australian Red Cross Blood Service to launch a nationwide recruitment drive in 2009 Year of the Blood Donor. The Blood Service is appealing for more than 100,000 new blood donors this year, in addition to the 40,000 who registered across Australia to give blood in the week after the Victorian bushfires.  
[http://www.healthinsite.gov.au/news/Year\\_of\\_the\\_Blood\\_Donor\\_2009](http://www.healthinsite.gov.au/news/Year_of_the_Blood_Donor_2009)

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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>).

Event organisers are now accepting abstracts, presentations and proposals for the sharing of cultural practices and performing arts. These need to be submitted by 8 September 2009 via the link on the home page of the HOSW website (<http://www.hosw.com>).

For more information:

Maria Halkitis - Contract Manager, 08 8943 5020

Mick Gooda - CEO, 0409 688 403

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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](mailto:grovesc@winshop.com.au) (do not "reply" to this email - send contributions to [grovesc@winshop.com.au](mailto: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 view of Jim Groves or any organisation he is associated with. Jim Groves can be contacted at [grovesc@winshop.com.au](mailto:grovesc@winshop.com.au)

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

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## Media Release

26 March 2009

### Climate change a factor in poor health of rural men

The Senate Select Committee on Men's Health has been told that a range of issues - including climate change and the inability to readily access health services in the bush - is contributing to the continued poor state of health of Australian men who live in rural and remote areas.

A hard-hitting submission by the National Rural Health Alliance said the primary causes that raise the death rate of men in rural and remote areas above that of their city counterparts are cardiovascular disease, emphysema and bronchitis, cancer, diabetes, motor accidents and suicide.

"Of critical importance to the health of men in rural and remote areas is the environment in which they live. Healthy economies, access to education, work and a range of community or social activities, community resilience and identity, decent housing and services are all keys to good health," said the Alliance submission.

It identified future reduced agricultural, forestry and fishing yields associated with climate change and resource degradation as a clear threat to the economic base of Australia's rural and remote communities, and cited the prevention of illness as "a major thrust of any strategy" to improve men's health.

The Alliance urged the Commonwealth to implement a longitudinal study of men's health to address these critical issues, with adequate sampling and sufficient scope to report for men in rural and remote areas, and for Indigenous men.

"Improving men's health should be given priority both as a health issue and as one that will improve economic productivity. A men's health policy should focus on preventative health (including through workplace measures), improve men's access to preventative services, and encourage men to reduce their personal health risks."

The Alliance also called on government "to improve the formative experiences of boys and their education" in rural and remote areas. A men's health policy needed to create "positive economic environments" by diversifying industries in rural and remote areas, adapting to climate change, installing broadband, developing adequate infrastructure projects including healthier town planning, all aimed at bolstering rural economies while improving the health of rural men.

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