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General News

The Day in the Life on-line diary for CtG is back!

We all work in exciting and different environments; it's what makes the Division network so unique!

The survey has been revamped and is now national, but it is still an anonymous diary where GP NSW is asking people working on Closing the Gap programs in the Divisions network to record what happens on a day-to-day basis.

We are hoping this will help Division staff to share what is actually happening on the ground across the country in implementing the Closing the Gap programs - the barriers, the wins, the joys and the frustrations.

GP NSW will collate the responses with the main purpose of providing feedback to Division staff and SBOs and looking for opportunities to develop strategies to assist Divisions in the implementation of the CtG programs.

Entries in the diary may also be used in publications that the SBO Network produce including funding submissions, reports, newsletters, and media releases and position papers.

Please make entries to the diary as many times as you can or want to. It will take just a few minutes a day.

All input to the diary is gratefully accepted!

Remember, the diary is COMPLETELY ANONYMOUS!

Make your first entry to the re-vamped diary by clicking on this link

<http://staging.gpnsw.com.au/survey/index.php?sid=35991&lang=en>

2011 NSW Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout

NSW Central West Division of General Practice, Dubbo Plains Division of General Practice and GP NSW are working together to have a Closing the Gap marquee at the 2011 NSW Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout in Bathurst from 30th Sept to 3rd October 2011. It is anticipated that between 15,000 and 20,000 people will attend the 4 day event.

Visitors to the marquee will

- have access to resources that tell them about CtG and specific info about their local Division,
- will be offered a "pit stop" assessment by GPs and RNs on hand. Any concerning results will be recorded on a referral card back to the CtG staff at their local Division, again together with details of the Division CtG contacts in their home town.

We are keen to promote the Divisions across the State at this event and will be requesting your input as we get closer to the date. At the moment this plan is in its very early stages and details of how to participate are still in formation.

Ways you and your Division can be part of this opportunity are:

- your Division might consider sponsoring the local team if they are attending, it would be great to see all sorts of Division Closing the Gap logos on team footy jumpers.

GP NSW will ask you to

- participate in the development of any resources developed for the event eg referral back to local Division
- Provide a stock of your local CtG community brochures
- Look at contributing extra funds so we can look at a 2nd marque or to take out advertising in the official program so Closing the Gap to have a greater presence
- Depending on capacity, provide staff to man the stand

If you are interested in being part of this opportunity, please submit an Expression of Interest by clicking on this link <http://staging.gpnsw.com.au/survey/index.php?sid=81299&lang=en>. Completing the Eoi does not mean you are obliged to take part.

AGPN IHPO Workforce Support Project

A six month project (April - September 2011) is being undertaken by AGPN to provide a layer of support to the National Indigenous Health Project Officer (IHPO) role. This project follows on from the National IHPO Orientation Workshop held in 2010 and further supports the work being done by State Based Organisations (SBOs), Divisions and individual IHPOs in sharing and connecting with one another in this important role. AGPN has contracted this work to Gilly Johnson, who you may remember from the Melbourne workshop. This project will provide good resources and activities so make sure you check it out! For further info see [attached](#) and go to: <http://agpn.com.au/programs/indigenous-health/ihpo-workforce-support-project>

New changes Practice Nurse Incentive Program

The Practice Nurse Incentive Program (PNIP) starts on 1 January 2012 and provides incentive payments to practices to support an expanded and enhanced role for nurses working in general practice. The PNIP simplifies financing arrangements by consolidating funding arrangements under the Practice Incentive Program (PIP) Practice Nurse Incentive and six of the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) practice nurse items and redirecting them into a single payment to eligible general practices. Aboriginal Medical Services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services may be eligible for an incentive to offset the costs of employing a practice nurse. One of the eligibility requirements is that your practice is accredited under the current Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Standards for general practice. More information on the PNIP can be found on the Medicare hyperlink: Practice Nurse Incentive Program Guidelines. <http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/incentives/pnip.jsp#guide>

Closing the Gap Clearinghouse Launch by the Hon. Jenny Macklin MP

The Hon. Jenny Macklin MP, Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs recently launched the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse at Parliament House in Canberra.

Three papers were released:

- What works to overcome Indigenous disadvantage 2009–10: Key learning's and gaps in the evidence provides an overview of evidence from the first year.
- Annual Report that outlines the first year of operation of the Clearinghouse.
- Resource Sheet No. 7, Early childhood and education services for Indigenous children prior to starting school by Professor Margaret Sims from the University of New England.

These papers can be found at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/closingthegap/publications/>

The Closing the Gap Clearinghouse has organised a series of presentations to be delivered in each state and territory. Presentations will be taking place in June in Brisbane, Sydney and Canberra. Please contact the Clearinghouse for further information if you are interested in attending.

To find upcoming conferences, seminars and workshops, browse the upcoming Events Calendar.

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/closingthegap/calendar/index.cfm>

Funding Opportunities

LIVE LONGER! Campaign funding Phase 2

The Live Longer Campaign is an Australian Government-funded program to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to 'Get Active. Eat Good Tucker. Live Longer!' **Phase 2 of this funding is now open from 13 June to 30 September.** The Department has engaged consultants Cox Inall Ridgeway to undertake various aspects of the Live Longer! Campaign. As part of this role, Cox Inall Ridgeway Community Coordinators can provide assistance to communities developing applications for Local Community Campaign grants. Cox Inall Ridgeway can also provide guidance and support in the delivery of projects that receive funding through the Local Community Campaigns program. For further information on how to apply for a grant, as well as stories, photos and videos from across Australia to raise awareness of chronic disease please visit www.livelonger.health.gov.au

Training Opportunities

The Puggy Hunter Memorial Scholarship Scheme is now open for applications.

The scholarship provides financial assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are intending to undertake study or are undertaking study in an entry level qualification at an Australian university or TAFE (certificate IV and above) level in the areas of:

- Aboriginal health worker
- Allied health (excluding pharmacy)
- Dentistry/oral health
- Enrolled nursing
- Medicine
- Midwifery
- Registered nursing.

The Scheme is now open for applications and will **close on Friday 16 September 2011.** Applications are available to access and complete from RCNA website: www.rcna.org.au/scholarships/puggy_hunter

Walking Through Research

The Walking Through Research program has been designed as an introductory health research training program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who work as community research assistants or are about to start postgraduate study.

The workshop registration is free and will run from **26-30 September 2011** on the Camperdown campus at The University of Sydney. Please find attached the [information sheet](#) and [registration form](#) for the workshop for 2011. Applications are now open, with applications who meet the criteria to be immediately awarded a place so apply soon to avoid disappointment. If you have any questions about the workshop please call Dr Shawn Wilson 0266207331.

Reports and Press Releases of Interest

Improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's access to medicines — the QUMAX program

Sophie Couzos, Vicki Sheedy and Dea Delaney Thiele

MJA Rapid Online Publication -- 21 June 2011

http://www.mja.com.au/public/issues/195_02_180711/cou10504_fm.html

Anti-tobacco programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Closing the Gap Clearing House

This resource sheet discusses the harms resulting from tobacco use in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and evidence-based approaches to reducing this harm. To be effective, strategies to reduce tobacco use need to acknowledge the historical context for its use, as well as the many socioeconomic influences. Tobacco interventions that have been developed by and/or for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and interventions that may be suitable for translation for use in such communities are considered. To ensure that program delivery meets the highest standard it should involve the community in design, delivery and evaluation.

[Report.](#)

Working with Indigenous children, families, and communities: lessons from practice

Rhys Price-Robertson, Myfanwy McDonald Communities and Families Clearinghouse Australia

Read the full text

Planning and delivering services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families, and communities can be a complex task for practitioners and policy-makers. Social problems are often deeply entrenched, and need to be approached with consideration of historical, social, community, family and individual factors. Furthermore, as Australian Indigenous cultures are not homogenous, Indigenous communities can differ considerably. Indigenous communities often have characteristics specific to geographic location, with significant variation evident across urban, rural, and remote communities. [Full Report](#)

Ex-prisoners at greater risk of hospital

In a comprehensive study of ex-prisoners' health, researchers from the University of Western Australia followed the progress of every adult released from the state's jails between 2000 and 2002. One in five adults released from Western Australian prisons during the study period were hospitalised in the 12 months that followed, which translated into 12,074 inpatient bed days, 3,426 separations and costs of \$10.4 million. Aboriginals, females and those released to freedom were most at risk of hospitalisation. It meant ex-prisoners were almost twice more likely to be hospitalised during a year than Western Australia's general adult population of similar age. The ex-prisoners spent about 12,000 days in hospital - most commonly admitted for mental health disorders like schizophrenia and depression - or injury associated with alcohol or other drug poisoning. See full [study](#).

Aboriginal doctor receives 2011 AMA excellence in health care award

An Aboriginal doctor has won the Australian Medical Association's (AMA) Excellence in Health Care Award for 2011 for the development of Indigenous health workforce policy. Dr Mark Wenitong, Associate Professor Adjunct, was presented with the award by AMA President, Dr Andrew Pesce, at the AMA's annual conference in Brisbane. The Excellence in Health Care Award. Click here to see full story <http://ama.com.au/node/6759>

Our doctors making a difference

O'Mara P (2011) Our doctors making a difference Medical Journal of Australia; 194: (493-494) View [article](#).

Closing the Gap Resources for General Practice

INDIGENOUS HEALTH INCENTIVE – CHANGE TO REGISTRATION PROCESS

From 1 July 2011, practices must submit a PIP Indigenous Health Incentive patient consent form when registering a patient. Previously, practices needed to send only the patient registration form. From 1 July, the registration form and the patient consent form must be submitted. This is a requirement for all practices, regardless of how they currently submit forms.

Patient consent forms signed before 1 July 2011 do not need to be submitted to Medicare Australia for registration, but will need to be kept on file at the practice for auditing purposes.

Medicare website. <http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/pubs/news/forum/index.jsp#N103AE>

Hypertension resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Heart Foundation, in partnership with the National Prescribing Service, National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia, has developed hypertension resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The resources have been developed to help Aboriginal Health Workers and health professionals deliver patient education.

The resources include a flip chart, patient brochure and five flyers for the patient and their families to take home. Attached the hypertension resource brochure as an example of the great resources available. Please click on the following link to use the Heart Foundations order form to obtain copies of all resources available.

http://www.nps.org.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/124195/NPS_GMBH_hypertension_Order_Form.PDF

Conferences, Workshops and Events

GP NSW State Closing the Gap Workshop, Darling Harbour, Sydney, 17 & 18 August 2011

Save the date!

The Program will be based on feedback from previous workshops. To ensure that a program is developed to meet your needs, please complete this quick online survey: <http://staging.gpnsw.com.au/survey/index.php?sid=35244&lang=en>

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Outreach Worker National Workshop June 21-22, 2011

GP NSW attended this event last week, and it was great to catch up with a number of NSW ATSIOWs, and to talk to Outreach Workers from across the country

The agenda included some interesting sessions that we will look at expanding upon at the GP NSW State Workshop on 17 and 18 August.

NACCHO hopes to have a report ready by the end of July, which will be distributed to Divisions when it arrives

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Project Phase 2

The aim of Health Workforce Australia's (HWA) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker project is to identify how the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker (or 'Health Worker') workforce can be strengthened to deliver care in response to the known burden and distribution of disease in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.

Phase 2 is underway with a series of consultation workshops being held across the country from May to July. The upcoming workshop for NSW is on 5th July 2011 in Sydney.

The project aims to identify how the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker workforce can be strengthened to deliver care to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. For further information contact Anna Leditschke 1800 707 351/anna.leditschke@hwa.gov.au or visit www.hwa.gov.au/atsihw

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