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## GP NSW eHEALTH FORUM

### Thursday 7 April 2011 at the Grace Hotel, Sydney

You are invited to the GPNSW eHealth Forum to be held on Thursday 7 April 2011 at the Grace Hotel, Sydney.

Please click [here](#) for the agenda, information sheet and online registration link. Please note the website will be updated regularly as information about the forum becomes available.

Contact Jacqueline Owens at [jacquelineowens@gpnsw.com.au](mailto:jacquelineowens@gpnsw.com.au) for further information.

## HEALTH REFORM UPDATE

### Heads of Agreement

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) met in Canberra on Sunday, 13 February for the first time during the Gillard Government. The Prime Minister, State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association discussed health reform and together created a [Heads of Agreement – National Health Reform](#) outlining a new deal for states, territories and the Commonwealth.

See the [COAG Communiqué and Heads of Agreement](#) for more information on new reform measures, such as the establishment of a single national funding pool for hospital financing and an increase in the numbers of planned Medicare Locals. Each Australian government has committed to signing a full National Health Reform Agreement by 1 July 2011.

### Medicare Locals – more, sooner

More Medicare Locals will be created and some will be set sooner under the Australian Governments renewed primary care focus. Despite agreeing in principle to 57 Medicare Local boundaries prior to Christmas last year, the Federal government has now decided that some of them are too large, and will increase the number so they can serve smaller populations.

The first wave of Medicare Locals will commence in July this year with a second wave to commence in January 2012 and the remainder to commence in July 2012. Under the PM's new plans, Medicare Locals will be funded to fast-track the establishment of face-to-face GP after-hours services.

Media release: <http://www.pm.gov.au/press-office/better-deal-patients-0>



## POLICY

### New Medicines Listed on the PBS and NIP

Australians will benefit from 7 new medicines and vaccines being listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) from 1 April 2011. Two new vaccines will also be added to the National Immunisation Program. This means that they will be fully funded by the Australian Government and provided free of charge to eligible children. One of which is a vaccine used to protect children against thirteen strains of pneumococcal disease. While the other is a combination vaccine used to protect children against two diseases: meningococcal C disease and *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib).

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr11-nr-nr029.htm>

### Draft Report Productivity Commission Disability Care and Support

The Commission was asked to examine the feasibility, costs and benefits of replacing the current system of disability services with a new arrangement that provides essential care and support for all Australians in the event of significant disability. The fundamental draft conclusion is that the current arrangements are systemically flawed. New national insurance arrangements are feasible and achievable.

The current disability support system is underfunded, unfair, fragmented, and inefficient, and gives people with a disability little choice and no certainty of access to appropriate supports. It is feasible to design a new system for long-term disability care and support, bringing together the current fragmented and underfunded arrangements.

The Commission is proposing two schemes. The largest scheme, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, would be like Medicare, in that all Australians would know that they or their families would get long-term care and support if they acquired a significant disability. A second much smaller scheme would cover people's lifetime care and support needs if they acquired a catastrophic injury from any accident.

Members of the public are invited to examine this report and make written submissions to the Productivity Commission by **30 April 2011**. <http://www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/disability-support/draft>

### National Palliative Care Strategy Released

An updated National Palliative Care Strategy to help ensure a nationally consistent and coordinated approach to the delivery of palliative care services across Australia has been released. The updated Strategy is available to download at [www.health.gov.au/palliativecare](http://www.health.gov.au/palliativecare) or by contacting [palliativecare@health.gov.au](mailto:palliativecare@health.gov.au).

## SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

### Contact Tracing

NSW State-wide STI Contact Tracing Working Group focuses efforts on supporting general practice to undertake STI contact tracing. In Australia, general practice is the main provider of sexual health care and contact tracing is an important part of a comprehensive STI control program. Evidence, from surveys and research, shows that many doctors are unaware of their responsibilities around contact tracing. Some of the barriers identified include their perceived lack of written guidelines, skills and experience.

The NSW Contact Tracing project aims to increase GPs awareness of their contact tracing responsibility and the resources available to them. The project is guided by an active working group. Membership includes sexual health



experts and general practitioners with an interest in the area. Practice Nurses are also represented as sexual health will be a key area as the practice nurse role evolves.

GP NSW has representation on the Contact Tracing Working Group and information and resources sourced or developed by this Group are included on the GP NSW website at <http://www.gpnsw.com.au/programs/sexually-transmitted-infections-sti/contact-tracing>.

For further information regarding this project contact Liz Meadley at [lizmeadley@gpnsw.com.au](mailto:lizmeadley@gpnsw.com.au)

## GPs supporting their patients with STI Contact Tracing

Most people who have been diagnosed with an STI feel that informing their sexual partners is the right thing to do so won't be surprised when the GP introduces contact tracing into the consultation. In general, people chose to notify their own partners. It is helpful to review the information they need to share with their partner and provide some written material or web links. There are a number of online resources for both patient and provider that can assist with contact tracing. These websites allow the patient to inform a partner by letter, email or SMS. It can be anonymous or not depending the patient's preferences. Practice staff may be able to help the patient send an email or SMS to their partners before leaving the clinic. It's a quick and easy option.

- [www.leththemknow.org.au](http://www.leththemknow.org.au) – Information and practical tips for patients. Offer the option of notifying contacts via email, SMS or letter.
- [www.thedramadownunder.info](http://www.thedramadownunder.info) – For MSM with information about STIs. Offer the option of notifying contacts via email or SMS.
- Australasian Contact Tracing Manual <http://ctm.ashm.org.au/>
- GP NSW Contact Tracing page [www.gpnsw.com.au/programs/sexually-transmitted-infections-sti/contact-tracing](http://www.gpnsw.com.au/programs/sexually-transmitted-infections-sti/contact-tracing) (has downloadable Contact Tracing letters)

If the patient has decided to notify their own partners it is useful to let them know that the GP or practice staff will follow up with a phone call (or at the next visit). If they haven't been able to let their partners know, then the GP/Practice should offer further assistance. The expectation of follow up increases notification rates.

For more complicated contact tracing the local sexual health clinic can provide support. Call the NSW Sexual Health Infoline on 1 800 451 624 for the number.

## RESOURCES

### New Cervical Cancer Vaccine Website

Cancer Council Australia has launched a new website [cervicalcancervaccine.org.au](http://www.cervicalcancervaccine.org.au) which aims to increase participation in the vaccination program, at a time when many girls aged 12–13 are returning to school and being offered the potentially life-saving vaccine. In a recent Australian study<sup>1</sup> almost 3000 students in Year 10 and Year 12 were interviewed, of whom only 33% had heard of HPV. Over half the girls interviewed (54%) didn't know that HPV is transmitted through sexual contact, while 62% weren't aware that HPV causes cervical cancer.

See <http://www.cervicalcancervaccine.org.au/>



## Getting Information about Medicines and Medical Devices Made Easier

Australians will now be able to more easily find information about medicines and medical devices approved for use by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing, Catherine King, has announced.

To view the full media release, select the link below:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr11-ck-ck008.htm>

## EDUCATION & TRAINING

### Nationally recognised qualifications in health consumer leadership and engagement

Health Issues Centre will be offering these new, innovative training programs for consumer leaders and health service staff in 2011. *The Course in Consumer Leadership* provides consumers with the foundation skills to engage and promote consumer engagement in health services. *The Vocational Graduate Certificate in Consumer Engagement* provides experienced consumer leaders and health service staff with the advanced skills and knowledge to develop and implement strategic consumer engagement in health services and government and non-government bodies. Places in both courses are limited.

Closing Date for Registration is **1st April**. For further information, including training program details, or to download a Registration Form please visit [www.healthissuescentre.org.au](http://www.healthissuescentre.org.au).

### Scholarships for Medical Practitioners working in Rural or Remote NSW

Family Planning NSW works to improve the reproductive and sexual health of the people of NSW. Four scholarships worth \$5,000 each will enable registered medical practitioners currently working in or planning to work in rural or remote areas of NSW to complete the Sexual Health & Family Planning Australia Certificate in Sexual and Reproductive Health. This certificate acknowledges that the participant has demonstrated a level of competence in theory and clinical skills and has been recognised by the RACGP, ACRRM, RANZCOG and AChSHM.

Funding of \$5,000 will be provided to cover theory and practical certificate course fees (valued at \$2,200) and contribute to travel, accommodation and other costs incurred in relation to course attendance. A total of four scholarships are available. Online applications close at 5pm on 29 April 2011. Information on the Certificate in Sexual & Reproductive Health course can be found on the Family Planning NSW website at [www.fpnsw.org.au](http://www.fpnsw.org.au) under Education and Training.

### Healthy lifestyle program for cancer survivors and carers

Cancer Council NSW is running a new program called **ENRICH** (Exercise and Nutrition Routine Improving Cancer Health), for cancer survivors and/or their carers and partners. Registrations are open from **NOW until mid-April 2011**. The program provides education and skills development in a series of motivational coaching sessions with three key areas being covered in each session: Healthy eating, Resistance training and Walking.

It is part of a research study being undertaken by the University of Newcastle. The Study will evaluate the impact of attending **ENRICH** on participants' lifestyle behaviours. Preliminary results from programs held in 2010 show a higher proportion of people in the intervention groups meeting the Australian Guidelines for physical activity and a steady increase in the amount of vegetables consumed. This program is guided by a chronic disease self-



management model and is supported by funding provided from the *Australian Better Health Initiative: a joint Australian, State and Territory government initiative*.

Programs will be held in Randwick starting in May 2011 and October 2011. **It is FREE to attend.** To find out more, call Gabrielle Asprey, Project Coordinator, Cancer Council NSW 02 9334 1772.

## Working beyond Cancer workshop

This free North Sydney based one day workshop is for members of the general community who have recently finished cancer treatment and planning to return to work. At the *Working beyond Cancer* workshop community members will learn from workplace experts, exercise and nutrition experts, counsellors, etc. A variety of practical and psychosocial topics will be covered including:

- Practical and emotional issues around returning to work or working through treatment
- Carers' needs in the workplace
- Communication with work colleagues and employees
- Legal and Superannuation issues
- Managing employees with and after cancer
- Exercise, nutrition and healthy lifestyle choices

Registration is essential. **Call NOW on 1300 200 558.** For further information, contact **Annie Miller** on the number above or **Cancer Council Helpline 13 11 20.**

## RESEARCH

### Cannabis link to psychosis

A new study has provided the first conclusive evidence that cannabis use significantly hastens the onset of psychotic illnesses during the critical years of brain development - with possible life-long consequences. The first ever meta-analysis of more than 20,000 patients shows that smoking cannabis is associated with an earlier onset of psychotic illness by up to 2.7 years. The analysis is by an international team including Dr Matthew Large, from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) School of Psychiatry and Sydney's Prince of Wales Hospital. Cannabis is the most widely used illicit drug in Australia with 33.5% of the population reporting use at some time, according to the 2007 National Drug Household Survey.

[http://www.unsw.edu.au/news/pad/articles/2011/feb/cannabis\\_study.html](http://www.unsw.edu.au/news/pad/articles/2011/feb/cannabis_study.html)

### Perceived barriers and facilitators to mental health help-seeking in young people: a systematic review

Adolescents and young adults frequently experience mental disorders, yet tend not to seek help.

This systematic review aims to summarise reported barriers and facilitators of help-seeking in young people using both qualitative research from surveys, focus groups, and interviews and quantitative data from published surveys. It extends previous reviews through its systematic research methodology and by the inclusion of published studies describing what young people themselves perceive are the barriers and facilitators to help-seeking for common mental health problems.

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/content/pdf/1471-244x-10-113.pdf>



## Public health expenditure in Australia, 2008-09

Since the first public health expenditure report in 1999-00, expenditure on public health activities by health departments has grown, in real terms, by 88%. Total expenditure on public health activities in Australia in 2008-09 was \$2,300.2 million. This was an increase of \$120.5 million, or 5.5%, on what was spent in 2007-08, raising the 2008-09 per person expenditure to \$106. After adjusting for the effects of inflation, there was a real increase in per person expenditure of 2.2% from 2007-08 to 2008-09, continuing the growth in total public health expenditure which has averaged 7.3% per year since 1999-00.

Click on the link to view the [media release](#) and [report](#).

## Australian Health Survey Gets Under Way

The Australian Health Survey about to be undertaken will help with the design and planning of a more focussed health care system for all Australians.

To view the full media release, go to:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr11-nr-nr035.htm>

## Call for Papers

### Health Issues – New deadline 14 March 2011

Issue #106 of Health Issues Centre's Journal is on Chronic Disease Management (CDM) and the new deadline for articles is Monday 14 March 2011.

Please consider contributing an article, opinion piece or news to Health Issues if you:

- are implementing a chronic disease care model in your health service;
- have been involved in delivering a self-management or peer support program;
- have attended a self-management or peer support program; or
- have an opinion about chronic disease self-management from the consumer and carer perspective.

If you would like to discuss your ideas or wish to express interest in making a written contribution please contact Tere Dawson on (03) 9479 3895 or email [t.dawson@healthissuescentre.org.au](mailto:t.dawson@healthissuescentre.org.au).

See: <http://www.healthissuescentre.org.au/publications/journal.shtml>



## WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES 2011

March	
24	<p><b>National Close the Gap Day 2011</b> OXFAM</p> <p>Show your support and <a href="#">register</a> your NCTGD event today — <a href="#">hosting an event</a> is easy. Or <a href="#">find an event near you</a> to attend!</p> <p>For more information: <a href="http://www.oxfam.org.au/act/events/close-the-gap-day/">http://www.oxfam.org.au/act/events/close-the-gap-day/</a></p>
25 – 27	<p><b>NSW RDN / RDA (NSW) 2011 Summer Refresher Conference</b> Novotel Pacific Bay Resort, Coffs Harbour 25 - 27 March 2011</p> <p>To register for the conference download the program from the <a href="#">NSW RDN website</a> under 'Conferences/CPD Events'.</p> <p>For more information contact the NSW Rural Doctors Network on 02 8337 8100 or <a href="mailto:conferences@nswrdn.com.au">conferences@nswrdn.com.au</a></p>
April	
4 – 6	<p><b>Communicable Disease Control Conference 2011</b> Public Health Association of Australia Inc (PHAA) Location: Hotel Realm, Canberra <a href="#">Registration form</a> 4 – 6 April 2011</p> <p>Sponsorship and Exhibition packages available upon requests. Please contact Janine Turnbull, <a href="mailto:marketing@phaa.net.au">marketing@phaa.net.au</a> or 02 62852373.</p>
7	<p><b>GP NSW eHealth Forum</b> GP NSW Location: Grace Hotel, Sydney 7 April 2011</p> <p>You are invited to the GPNSW eHealth Forum - Thursday 7 April 2011 at the Grace Hotel, Sydney.</p> <p>Please click <a href="#">here</a> for the agenda, information sheet and online registration link. Please note the website will be updated regularly as information about the forum becomes available.</p> <p>For further information, please contact Jacqueline Owens at <a href="mailto:jacquelineowens@gpnsw.com.au">jacquelineowens@gpnsw.com.au</a>.</p>
7 – 9	<p><b>APNA National Conference 2011 - Roadmap for the Future – Great Expectations</b> APNA Location: Hilton Hotel Sydney – 488 George Street, Sydney, NSW 2000 7 – 9 April 2011</p> <p>After the outstanding success of its first two conferences (<i>The Right Stuff</i> and <i>Golden Opportunities</i>), APNA will be holding a third, inspiring conference in 2011. The conference, 'Roadmap for the Future - Great Expectations' will feature renowned keynote speakers, interactive master classes, extensive opportunities to network with practice nurses from</p>



	<p>around Australia, and much more. Registrations are now open for the conference.</p> <p>For more information, and to view the full program and submit a registration, please visit <a href="http://www.apna.asn.au/conference">www.apna.asn.au/conference</a>.</p> <p>If you have any queries please contact the conference organisers Baldwin Consulting Group on (03) 9645 9858 or <a href="mailto:liz@baldwinconsulting.com.au">liz@baldwinconsulting.com.au</a>.</p>
<b>May</b>	
<b>5 – 6</b>	<p><b>Aboriginal Health Research Conference-‘Research for a better Future’</b></p> <p>5 - 6 May 2011</p> <p>This conference will showcase Aboriginal Health Research and promote community, research and policy engagement and exchange in Aboriginal health, to allow communities to describe their health and research priorities and to provide opportunities for sharing information and establishing collaborations among Aboriginal community members, researchers and policy makers. The conference will be held on 5 - 6 May 2011 in Sydney.</p> <p>Further information contact Julie McGraw <a href="mailto:jmcgraw@gemspl.com.au">jmcgraw@gemspl.com.au</a>.</p>
<b>July</b>	
<b>3 – 10</b>	<p><b>Naidoc Week 2011 - Change: the Next Step is Ours</b></p> <p>3 – 10 July</p> <p>For entry forms and information on NAIDOC Week, visit <a href="http://www.naidoc.org.au/">http://www.naidoc.org.au/</a>.</p>
<b>Nov</b>	
<b>25</b>	<p><b>NSW RDN /RDA (NSW) Rural GPs Conference</b></p> <p><b>25 – 27 November 2011</b></p> <p><b>CPD Weekend</b></p> <p><b>Location: TBC</b></p> <p>For further information, contact Arna Wotherspoon - Phone: 02 8337 8100, Fax: 02 8337 8110, Email: <a href="mailto:conferences@nswrdn.com.au">conferences@nswrdn.com.au</a>.</p>



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Phone: 02 9239 2900.

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