

AGPN E News

Delivering local health solutions through general practice



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AGPN and NT Aboriginal communities

AGPN has played an integral part in the Federal Government's Emergency Response Plan in the Northern Territory. AGPN Board member Dr Emil Djakic arrived in Alice Springs on Sunday 8 July before heading to the more remote community of Hermannsburg. A large part of what Dr Djakic has been doing involves meeting with community elders and explaining the health check process. AGPN Chair Dr Tony Hobbs arrived in Alice Springs yesterday. He will leave for a more remote community tomorrow. AGPN will keep you informed on the progress being made in these communities.

headspace

headspace has announced the opening of its second and final funding round. Groups of organisations from across Australia can apply for up to \$1 million each from a total pool of \$20 million.

headspace is looking for communities who are motivated to make a difference to young people in their local area by establishing innovative community based youth friendly mental health services. Information sessions for interested organisations are being held across the country. To view dates and times please visit http://www.agpn.com.au/client_images/110424.pdf

Applications are required by the close of business on Monday 10th September 2007. Submission information and application forms are available by registering at www.headspace.org.au

Mental Health e-book

For the first time comes a powerful compilation book of Australian stories of people who have suffered from clinical depression and recovered including Geoff Gallop, Petria Thomas and John Konrads. Compiled by Sydney's Graeme Cowan, *Back From The Brink*, details discussions with well-known and everyday Australians about their personal journey of enduring and overcoming depression.

Written in a question and answer format, the book offers a raw and immediate format that strikes straight to the heart. Graeme asks the tough and poignant questions of each interviewee, offering insights into their often dark and tumultuous experience. The stories show just how real and prevalent depression is in Australian through these honest, first-hand accounts, but also offers inspiration and hope for sufferers and friends and family of sufferers that there can truly be a day where loved ones come 'back from the brink'.

Readers will be amazed, challenged, inspired and, at times, infuriated by these stories. Aside from personal stories, *Back from the Brink* offers practical tips on coping with depression. *Back From The Brink* truly is an uplifting book about reaching up and out of the black fog of depression. To get your free copy click here <http://www.iambackfromthebrink.com/eBook.html>

INSTEP Program

Senior citizens are quietly making a difference in remote Indigenous communities, sharing the skills gained from their lifetimes of experience. In a recent joint initiative with the Federal Government, National Seniors Australia has already assigned volunteers to remote communities in Queensland, Northern Territory and the Torres Strait Region, with very positive results.

In addition to supplying tutors to help with literacy and numeracy in the schools, expert retired tradesmen are going into communities with accreditation to not only train young adults in their trades but also to provide trade qualifications. This will permit young Indigenous adults to either make major contributions in their own communities or, if they wish, to move to well-paid jobs in larger regional centres.

Anyone who would like to volunteer for this kind of work is encouraged to contact Olivia Molaei on (07) 3233 9131 or via email on o.molaei@nationalseniors.com.au

Strategic Planning Day- Melbourne

The Strategic Planning Day held in Melbourne at the end of last month proved very successful for the Network. The ideas collected from the 186 Network representatives will be collated and officially launched at this year's Forum. The plan will provide the Network with key objectives to aim towards that will drive the Network into the future.

Mental Health Day

The feedback from Network members who attended the COAG Mental Health day also held in Melbourne at the end of last month has been extremely positive. The day allowed for AGPN to work with the Network to recognise and capitalise on the opportunities presented under the COAG mental health funding.

Forum Update- Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart 15-18 November 2007

Accommodation and flights to Hobart are filling quickly. AGPN encourage delegates to organise their travel as soon as possible so they don't miss out on reasonable flights and accommodation. Delegates should also visit the website as the full program, complete with the line-up of speakers is available for viewing on the website at http://www.gpnetworkforum.com.au/client_images/109101.pdf

Medicare Easyclaim Demo

Network members interested in having a demonstration of the Integrated Medicare Easyclaim can contact AGPN. For more details please contact Jan at AGPN jmcrobie@agpn.com.au

Communications Strategy

The Network's coordinated public response to the Federal Government's NT response plan has reinforced the Network's position as a key driver in Indigenous health. The Network has received national coverage through Dr Emil Djakic's role as the first GP to arrive as part of the government's plan. AGPN media releases can be viewed online at <http://www.agpn.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=305>

To view Dr Tony Hobbs' ABC online opinion piece please visit <http://abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/06/26/1961864.htm>

The Network's media packs have generated significant coverage for Network members across the country. Men's health and kidney awareness were well received by local media outlets. The topic for August will be related to cancer, leveraging off Daffodil Day. If you require any information about the media packs or require any further advice please contact Kathryn at kconroy@agpn.com.au

For Practices

Heart Guidelines

The Heart Foundation and the Cardiac Society have recently released updates of two major guidelines- 'Reducing Risk in Heart Disease: guidelines for the prevention of cardiovascular events in people with coronary heart disease' and 'Guidelines for the prevention, detection and management of chronic heart failure in Australia'. These resources can be downloaded from the Heart Foundation website at www.heartfoundation.com.au

New Medicare Item Number

Following extensive discussions with the Department of Health and Ageing, AGPN are pleased to announce a new Medicare item for monitoring and support to patients with a chronic disease management plan by a practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker. For full details please visit <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/content/pacd-medicare-mbs-item10997->

[factsheet.htm](#) or

http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/providers/incentives_allowances/medicare_initiatives.shtml

Authority Scripts

The Federal Government's changes to the PBS authority script system that started on 1 July have been welcomed by AGPN. AGPN argued strongly for a reduction in the number of prescriptions that require phone authority in order to cut some of the red tape facing general practice.

Here is a link to the fact sheet:

<http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/resources/pbs/PBS-doctor-factsheet.pdf>

And here is a link to the streamlined authority prescriptions:

<http://www.pbs.gov.au/html/healthpro/browseby/streamlined-authority>

Positions Vacant

General Practice Queensland is seeking a dynamic professional to fulfil the position of program coordinator in aged care. For more information please visit

<http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=1591&filter=i&leca=16&did=5910714>