

World Mental Health Day, 10 October



World Mental Health Day (WMHD) is an initiative of the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) and is co-sponsored by the World Health Organisation (WHO). World Mental Health Day takes place on 10 October each year, and within Australia WMHD coincides with National Mental Health Week. The WMHD theme set by the WFMH for 2005 is the relationship between physical and mental health: co-occurring mental and physical disorders.

The Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA) has again been funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing and the MHCA Pharmaceutical Collaboration to develop a national campaign for WMHD.

The Mental Health Council's WHMD 2005 campaign aims to raise awareness of the relationship between mental and physical health, with the theme *Be active for your mental health*. The campaign will promote the importance of protecting our mental and physical health and preventing ill health through increased physical activity, especially group (team) activities which facilitate stronger community and family connections.

The key messages imparted in WMHD activities will be:

Act – people should strive to keep themselves active in as many ways as possible, including physical, social and cognitive, eg. walking, reading, visiting a museum, doing a crossword, visiting a friend

Belong – become a member of an organisation to strengthen a person's connection to the community, eg. joining a book club or walking group, attending community meetings and events, participating more often in organisations of which the person is already a member

Commit – the level of effort a person commits to the activities they are engaged in, eg. becoming a volunteer for a charity or community organisation, taking up challenging tasks, being involved in a good cause.

Seventeenth century philosopher Rene Descartes conceptualised the distinction between the mind and the body. He viewed the 'mind' as completely separable from the 'body'. And for almost 2 centuries, mental health advocates have been trying to put them back together. This separation between so-called 'mental' and 'physical' health has no real relevance to the scientific understanding of health in the 21st century; yet the myths and misinformation persist. Mental health advocates all over the world have, in almost apologetic posturing, said that this false premise should no longer exist and yet these voices continue to go unheard. The time has come to reinforce what we stand for – mind and body are inseparable: health is a complete state of wellbeing – and there is no health without mental health.

World Federation for Mental Health, 2004

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For more information about what's happening on World Mental Health Day and throughout National Mental Health Week, visit the MHCA website at: www.mhca.org.au.

Training steps up in 2005

Mental health education and training appear to be increasingly popular with the general practice community. Conservative figures from the RACGP QA&CPD Program suggest that at the date of publication, more than 1500 general practitioners (GPs) undertook a GPMHSC accredited Level One Mental Health Skills Training this year alone.

Dr Brian Kable, a GP from Brisbane and chair of the GPMHSC said, "the continuing enthusiasm among GPs for quality mental health training is a great sign for the community."

Although a subset of these GPs were already registered with the Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care Program, approximately 70% were not registered before 2005 and are 'new recruits' to the program.

A further 1600 GPs have completed other mental health education activities (including Level One Ongoing CPD, Level Two Training and Level Two Ongoing CPD). In total about 3100 GPs, or around 14% of the general practice workforce have undertaken GPMHSC accredited training in one form or another since 1 January 2005.

For general information on forthcoming training, contact your CPD college (RACGP or ACRRM) or your division of general practice.

For forthcoming GPMHSC accredited Level One and Two Skills Training, visit the GPMHSC website at: www.racgp.org.au/mentalhealth.

Use of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors in pregnant women

New information has recently become available that suggests pregnant women who take selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) antidepressant medicines in early pregnancy may have an increased risk of giving birth to an infant with a heart problem. This association appears to be strongest for the SSRI medicine, paroxetine. Paroxetine is registered in Australia under the trade names Aropax, Oxetine, Paxtine, Chem mart, GenRx and Terry White Chemists paroxetine, Paroxetine-RL, Paroxetine-BC, Paroxetine Hexal, Espar, Loxamine, Paroxat CR and Ausrox.

More information is available at: www.racgp.org.au.

Youth Mental Health Foundation

A new Youth Mental Health Foundation to better assist young Australians who suffer from mental illness will be established by the Australian Government.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, Christopher Pyne, said that the foundation would provide a national coordinated focus on youth mental health and related drug and alcohol problems in Australia.

The foundation will be funded under the \$69 million 2005–2006 Promoting Better Mental Health Budget initiative.

“One in four young Australians suffer from mental illness in any 1 year and three-quarters of all mental health problems begin before the age of 25,” Mr Pyne said.

“When left untreated, mental health problems like depression and anxiety may lead to alcohol and substance abuse, and up to half of young people with these problems directly attribute them to untreated or poorly treated mental health concerns.”

The key objectives of the initiative are to:

- promote early seeking of help by young people
- increase the mental health literacy of young people
- facilitate access to best practice treatment for young people with mental health problems, including those with associated drug and alcohol problems
- enable better access to allied health services for young people
- support local, integrated approaches to meet the needs of young people, particularly those with comorbid mental health and drug and alcohol problems, and
- build the skills and confidence of GPs and other key providers of care, and support in the community, in order to provide effective and appropriate mental health services to young people.

To meet the objectives of the initiative, the foundation will provide a centre of excellence to promote evidence based practice in youth mental health and related drug and alcohol problems, and will foster community awareness of youth mental health issues and promote young people's help seeking behaviour.

It will also administer a local grants program to help coordinate services for young people with mental health problems and develop and disseminate evidence based education and training resources for GPs and other service providers working with young people.

The foundation's activities will have a particular focus on early identification and intervention for young people at risk of developing mental health problems, or for those already showing early signs of

mental health problems or associated drug and alcohol problems. The foundation's primary target group will be young people aged 12–25 years, however, there is scope to provide expertise and support in relation to the needs of children if supported by an evidence base.

More information about research and activities in youth mental health, as well as links to a range of resources of use to health professionals, can be found at the Centre for Adolescent Health at: www.rch.org.au/cah/ and NSW Centre for the Advancement of Adolescent Health at: www.caah.chw.edu.au.

Provider profile: Black Dog Institute

According to the WHO “depression is the second biggest problem in the world after heart disease”. However, the vast majority of people with this illness can be successfully helped.

The Black Dog Institute, funded by the NSW Centre for Mental Health, is helping to advance the understanding, diagnosis and management of mood disorders. Depression has long been recognised as the most common psychiatric disorder seen in general practice. As such, one of the Institute's key aims is to provide health professionals with an opportunity to learn more about mood disorders so that they can better diagnose and treat patients with depressive and bipolar disorders.

The Black Dog Institute has been delivering accredited general practice education programs since 2002. The Institute offers two key types of programs for GPs: a 6 hour workshop, *Identifying your priorities: managing depression in general practice*, which qualifies GPs for Level 1 of the Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care program; as well as a series of 3 hour interactive lectures, some of which are based on individual components from the 6 hour program. The institute also recognises the needs of general practice registrars, and has customised these programs to suit them working in both metropolitan and rural NSW. None of the institute's education programs are sponsored by pharmaceutical companies.

The customised general practice registrar program has gone from strength to strength since its launch in 2004. The program is generally tailored to fit into a scheduled 'day release', enabling participants to complete the 7 hour program in 1 day. Since the start of the new triennium, the institute's Education Project Team has delivered 13 Level 1 BOiMHC workshops, of which 7 were customised programs delivered to registrars throughout NSW in conjunction with various regional training providers. Feedback to date has been extremely positive, with many participants commenting that the interactive components are particularly beneficial.

Psychiatrists and GPs, who also collaborate with the project team to ensure that programs are regularly reviewed updated, facilitate all of the institute's GP education programs. The project team strives to improve its programs by incorporating feedback from not only participants who attend its programs but also from experts in the field of mood disorders, as well as consumers and the community. New topics recently introduced by the Education Project Team



include, special interest forums on perinatal mental health, child and adolescent depression and bipolar disorders. Clinicians can also access further high quality information and clinician aids via the Black Dog's website.

For more information regarding the Black Dog Institute's Education and Training, please visit: www.blackdoginstitute.org.au or contact the Education Project Officer at: j.bell@unsw.edu.au.

Key Drug and Alcohol Conference, Melbourne, 6–9 November

The 2005 APSAD conference promises to be an exciting and dynamic event with a full program of keynote speakers, symposia, clinical workshops and abstract driven oral and poster sessions. The conference will bring together Australian and overseas students, researchers, health professionals and advocates from the drug and alcohol sector with an interest in science, practice and experience. It is ideally suited to all GPs – those who are already involved in addictions in their practice, and those who have yet to realise that about 20% of the patient group have addiction related problems.



International keynote speakers will cover topics that include pharmacotherapies, neuro-imaging and craving, harm reduction, families, self help and other clinical perspectives on addiction. Oral sessions and workshops cover topics such as blood borne viruses, comorbidity in young people, international perspectives, pharmacotherapies, medication diversion, alcohol trends, inhalants, cannabis, brief intervention practices and indigenous issues.

General practitioners comprise a significant workforce in alcohol and drugs, and the conference attracts a substantial number of medical professionals. This year, there are a number of specific functions and events including:

- clinical workshops – hospitals and alcohol withdrawal, guidelines for managing pregnant drug dependent women, and young people and mental health
- mental health symposia
- emergency departments, hospitals and drugs
- the role of GPs in alcohol and drugs
- meeting on Medicare benefits
- symposium: why the RACP must have a view on alcohol.

Visit the conference website at:

www.apsadconference.com.au to register online, and for full conference programs, abstracts for every presentation and details of satellite meetings.

Level One Mental Health Skills Training 2005–2007

Courses have been accredited by the GPMHSC on a range of topics. For more information about the particular content of a program, contact the training provider, or visit the GPMHSC website for a brief descriptor at: www.racgp.org.au/mentalhealth.

Not all training providers listed have dates scheduled in the near

future, but if you do have an interest in undertaking mental health education and training in a particular area, make sure you let the mental health program staff at your division of general practice know, as this helps in planning local events.

If you are a provider of training to GPs or other professional groups (or are interested in becoming one) and would like more information on developing education activities for GPs, contact the GPMHSC Secretariat on 03 8699 0576, or email: pdomh@racgp.org.au.

Australia wide

Your mental health and alcohol: managing the mix

Provider: Australian Divisions of General Practice
6 hours
Tel 03 8480 4616
Email scarter@adgp.com.au
Website www.adgp.com.au

General and advanced courses in counselling, relaxation, stress management, CBT and hypnotherapy

Provider: College of Medical Hypnosis
6 days (intensive)
Tel 02 9688 2300
Email psychmed@idx.com.au
Website www.mindperformance.com

SPHERE: Introduction to depression and anxiety: a training program for GPs

Provider: Educational Health Solutions
9 hours
Tel 1300 651 344
Email blythe.forde@e-hs.com.au
Website www.spheregp.com.au

Graduate Certificate in Mental Health (General Practice) Units 1 and 2

Provider: NSW Institute of Psychiatry
2 subjects over 15 weeks
Tel 02 9840 3833
Email kathy.lambert@nswiop.nsw.edu.au
Website www.nswiop.nsw.edu.au

Depression and anxiety disorders: primary care assessment and management

Provider: Primary Care Mental health Unit (University of Adelaide)
6 hours
Tel 08 8303 3466
Email wendy.newbury@adelaide.edu.au

Time efficient mental health – solutions for time poor GPs

Provider: Wyeth Australia Pty Ltd
6 hours
Tel 02 8850 8317
Email days@wyeth.com

New South Wales

Identifying your priorities: managing depression in general practice

Provider: Black Dog Institute
6 hours
Tel 02 9382 4518
Email j.bell@unsw.edu.au
Website www.blackdoginstitute.org.au

Level one mental health skills training

Provider: Hunter Rural Division of General Practice
6 hours
Tel 02 4926 5380
Email bronwyn@hrdgp.org.au

Common psychological presentations in general practice

Provider: Sutherland Division of General Practice
8 hours (4 x 2 hours)
Tel 02 9525 4011
Email gminto@shiregps.org.au

SIGPET mental health training

Provider: Sydney Institute of General Practice Education and Training
6 hours
Tel 02 9818 4433
Email louis@sigpet.com.au
Website www.sigpet.com.au

Victoria**How to open a can of worms**

Provider: Alma Family Therapy Centre
12 hours (4 x 3 hours)
Tel 03 9500 2411
Email liviajackson@almfamilytherapy.com
Website www.almfamilytherapy.com

Mental health assessment, planning, management and review

Provider: Bendigo Health Care Group/Centre for Rural Mental Health
6 hours
Tel 03 5454 7756
Email afahey@bendigohealth.org.au

Cognitive behavioural therapy skills for adolescent depression

Provider: Mornington Peninsula Division of General Practice (in conjunction with Monash University Centre for Developmental Psychology and Psychology)
10 hours
Tel 03 9769 6133
Email D.Lhuede@mpdgp.org.au
Website www.mpdgp.org.au

Practical CBT skills for the management of anxiety in general practice

Provider: North East Valley Division of General Practice
6 hours
Tel 03 9496 4333
Email alison@nevdgp.org.au
Website www.nevdgp.org.au

PRIME CARE – Level 1 GP mental health training and advanced reskilling

Provider: North East Victorian Division of General Practice
9 hours
Tel 03 5762 2444
Email renee.williams@nhw.hume.org.au

Skills training for assessment and management of common mental health disorders

Provider: Northern Division of General Practice
9 hours
Tel 03 8480 4609
Email kay.dufty@ndgp.org.au
Website: www.ndgp.com.au

Cognitive behaviour therapy skills for adolescent depression

Provider: RACGP Victoria
6 hours
Tel 03 8699 0483
Email rosetta.midiri@racgp.org.au

Western Australia**Better outcomes – better incomes**

Provider: Fremantle Regional Division of General Practice
6 hours
Tel 08 9319 0555
Email katiep@frdgp.com.au

South Australia**Preventing self harm and suicide**

Provider: Dept of General Practice, University of Adelaide
6 hours
Tel 08 8303 3466
Email wendy.newbury@adelaide.edu.au

Feeling attached: parent and infant mental health

Provider: South Australian Divisions of General Practice & Helen Mayo House, Women & Children's Hospital
8 hours
Tel 08 8303 1451
Email thielew@wch-camhs.sa.gov.au

Online**Mental health skills for general practitioners**

Provider: Med-E-Serv
Not yet online. Contact Med-E-Serv for more information
6 hours
Tel 07 3870 2502
Email PriMeD.Coordinator@medeserv.com.au
Website www.primed.com.au

Managing depression in general practice

Provider: *gplearning* (RACGP)
7 hours
Tel 1800 284 732
Email contactus@gplearning.com.au
Website www.gplearning.com.au

Managing psychosis in general practice

Provider: *gplearning* (RACGP)
Please note this program is not yet fully available. Contact *gplearning* for more information
6 hours
Tel 1800 284 732
Email contactus@gplearning.com.au
Website www.gplearning.com.au

Comments, address changes and enquiries relating to this newsletter can be directed to the GPMHSC Secretariat on 03 8699 0554 or via email at: gpmhsc@racgp.org.au.

If you would prefer to receive your newsletter electronically, please forward your details via email to: gpmhsc@racgp.org.au. Please include your:

- full name
- practice postcode
- email address
- RACGP or ACCRRM number (if applicable)
- Non-GPs should also include their organisation name.

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