

# ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES AND PSYCHOLOGY INTEREST GROUP

## APRIL NEWSLETTER 2012

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### ATSIPP BUSINESS

#### **A word from the Convenors**

First of all a huge thank you to our Secretary, Kylie Cann, who has managed to put together a wonderfully informative newsletter in the style of Kerrie Kelly from the last few years. We hope this is what the members of the Interest Group want as well, as this is the main vehicle of communication with you. And please let us know if you have any ideas about how we can improve it.

We like the idea of having a theme for each issue of the Newsletter. The next one is already earmarked for *Indigenous Success Stories*, but it would be timely to have one later in the year celebrating this as the 21st year of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Psychology Interest Group. So if any of you have any reflections on the past 20 years that you'd like to share, please let us know. We'll put out an invitation for contributions to the 20th anniversary issue in the next Newsletter.

The Interest Group Committee has been involved in developing the APS Reconciliation Action Plan, as Kylie has mentioned and which many of you will be aware of by now. Whilst we are supportive of all aspects of the RAP, our particular interest is in helping to build the workforce of Indigenous Psychologists. One way of doing this is by asking Interest Group members to consider mentoring current Indigenous Psychology students and this process has been started with the first three bursaries mentioned later in the Newsletter. We are also planning to hold a discussion session with current and past students at the APS Conference in Perth in September to help to identify barriers to the progress of Indigenous Psychology students so that we can work out ways to overcome them. It would be good to see as many as possible of you there. Happy Reading  
Stephen Meredith, Co-Convenor

### **A word from the Newsletter Editor/Secretary**

Having compiled my last Newsletter for the ATSIPP Interest Group back in 2006, I was pleased to see that members were still keen to receive information in this format and to hear how much each edition was valued. I was also extremely hesitant to follow in the footsteps of Kerrie Kelly, particularly given that every person I talked to spoke of her 'remarkable technical skills' and her capacity to keep abreast of information pertaining to issues relevant to the IG. I am sure I speak on behalf of all who have received Kerrie's newsletters in saying that she produced a high quality product. It is plain to see that the time and effort she put into the Interest Group and AIPA was greatly appreciated and we wish her the very best as she pursues new interests. Given the wonderful format Kerrie provided for the Newsletters, I have decided to adopt a similar layout and have done my best to source articles and information of relevance to the IG. Given the wealth and importance of the information that came out of Damien Howard's work on Indigenous Hearing Loss, I have included a new section entitled *ATSIPP Members Input*. I hope to use this section to highlight and share the work being conducted by IG members in the community so your contributions are really important for future editions. Focusing on the theme of *Indigenous Hearing Loss* as much as possible throughout this newsletter, I hope we all come away knowing more about this issue and the ensuing implications for how we engage and communicate with Indigenous clients. I trust you will find this edition of the newsletter useful and any feedback or suggestions are more than welcome via email [kylie\\_cann@bigpond.com](mailto:kylie_cann@bigpond.com). Members are also invited to contribute to the next newsletter's theme on the topic of *Indigenous Success Stories*. Happy Reading!

Kind Regards, Kylie Cann

### **Membership Renewal**

Did you know that AIPA has described the ATSIPP interest group as 'the reconciliation arm of the APS', potentially using its greater numbers (around 250) to support and amplify the work of AIPA's (fewer than 50) members. As such, this is a very exciting time to be a part of the interest group. We would encourage existing members to renew their membership as a way of connecting with like-minded APS members and carrying forward our work in this field. We also encourage interest group members to promote

the interest group to other APS members who are committed to promoting the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

### **Invitation to Join the Committee**

We are still keen to attract representation from members residing in Tasmania, Western Australia, Queensland and Victoria. This will help to ensure we are able to keep abreast of issues pertaining to each state and allows us to share with other member's activities occurring in each region. The level of your involvement can be flexible to work in with other commitments and can include formal or informal activities such as dialing up to take part in our regular teleconferences, emailing us about events or initiatives occurring in your area or workplace, writing an article, commenting on practical resources you may have discovered, summarising some training you attended, sharing a success story or even providing a link between the ATSIPP Interest Group and your local APS Branch.

## **APS INITIATIVES**

### **Indigenous Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Website**

Have you visited the new APS social and emotional wellbeing and mental health services website yet? Put together by members of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association (AIPA) and the Public Interest Team at the APS National Office, the official launch took place at the APS National Conference held in Canberra late last year. The website resource was designed to be responsive to community and sector needs and is intended for health professionals, policy-makers and anyone interested in learning about the provision of social and emotional wellbeing and/or mental health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The site includes a database of Indigenous-specific programs and services across Australia, examples of 'Promising Practices' to assist service providers in adapting their principles and methods to better meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as well as resources such as relevant screening and assessment tools and useful links to further information. The long-term success of the website requires wide dissemination of its function and content. The APS is keen to monitor the website and receive feedback. To utilise this website visit <http://www.sewbmh.org.au/> and email comments to [sewbmh@psychology.org.au](mailto:sewbmh@psychology.org.au)

### **Reconciliation Action Plan Updates**

*How many psychologists have an understanding of Aboriginal people? How many of you ... have an understanding of Aboriginal culture, history and contemporary issues? For many of you, this work is crucial given the social conditions and your work environment in such places as prisons and the welfare sector and where there are large numbers of Aboriginal clients. It is your responsibility to seek that knowledge and understanding now, and to ensure that it is available for future generations of psychologists, in psychological training and education programs.* Rob Riley, Indigenous keynote address, 1995 APS Annual Conference

Rob Riley, an inspirational Aboriginal justice activist in WA and nationally, put forward this challenge to Australian psychologists. He highlighted psychology's key role in working with Aboriginal people and communities, and its responsibility to do so in a way that is respectful and informed. Tragically, Rob committed suicide less than 12 months after this keynote address, which was published posthumously.

As the peak organisation for psychologists, the APS represents a key professional group working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have experienced racism and trauma from multiple causes, including the Stolen Generations. Reconciliation is fundamental to our response to Rob Riley's challenge to us all. It involves building mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and other Australians that allow us to work together to solve problems and generate success that is in everyone's best interests (Reconciliation Australia, 2010). Reconciliation is everyone's business.

As you are aware the APS, in close partnership with the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association (AIPA) and Reconciliation Australia, is currently developing a RAP as part of our commitment to working towards reconciliation and towards closing the gap in Indigenous health outcomes and life expectancy. This is a whole-of-APS initiative that is being overseen by a diverse working group which includes representatives of the APS Board, APS RAP partners, AIPA, ATSIPP, Indigenous organisations, psychologists and APS staff and is co-chaired by APS President Simon Crowe and Professor Pat Dudgeon, and progressed internally by the APS Public Interest staff at the National Office. <http://www.psychology.org.au/Content.aspx?ID=3976>

Many members have expressed an interest in participating in the APS Reconciliation Action Plan. The RAP is an invitation to all APS members and member groups to imagine what a 'post-Reconciliation' Psychology profession might look like, and what we might all be doing more or differently if our visions for reconciliation were achieved. The first draft will be posted in the coming weeks on the APS website. As we work towards the final RAP over the next two months, all APS members are invited to have a look at, discuss and send comments to [Reconciliation\\_aps@psychology.org.au](mailto:Reconciliation_aps@psychology.org.au). The RAP is due to be considered by the APS Board in June and launched at this year's national conference.

### **Get Involved in the RAP**

Once completed, the APS branches, as well as other member groups, will play a critical role in communicating and implementing the goals of the RAP at the local level, so if you are in a position to encourage your local branch to consider what the APS RAP might mean to them, that would be a useful starting point. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Psychology Interest Group is another avenue for involvement, and co-chair Stephen Meredith is a member of the RAP working group so could be a good contact for ideas [Stephen.Meredith2@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:Stephen.Meredith2@health.sa.gov.au). We would encourage you to first find out what is being organised in your local area, as there are often great opportunities to be involved with existing organisations in planning activities around significant cultural

events, such as Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week etc. and the partnerships that can be formed in this way can represent a fine example of reconciliation in practice. Or you may decide to develop APS/psychology-focused RAP activities independent of these events. The Reconciliation Australia Website presents a wonderful range of ideas for consideration <http://reconciliation.org.au/nrw>. See the *Diary Dates* section of this newsletter for more information.

### **Other RAP Initiatives**

Look out also for the April issue of *InPsych*, which features two articles on how APS members in academic settings can build partnerships towards reconciliation, and on how members can support Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander students in their psychology studies (see Indigenous Student Mentor Program below).

### **APS Awards for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians studying Psychology**

Originally founded in 2006 by former APS President Amanda Gordon, the bursary fund was established to alleviate some of the financial concerns Indigenous students may experience in seeking to complete a postgraduate professional degree in psychology. The overall aim is to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander psychologists in order that we may respond more adequately to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. As part of the 2011 APS membership renewal, members were given the opportunity to donate to the fund. These generous contributions have resulted in the provision of funds to support a total of three Indigenous postgraduate psychology students in 2012 and will be announced in this month's edition of *InPsych*. Following successful completion of their studies, the fund will have assisted a total of six Indigenous postgraduate psychology students since the program was established. We echo the sentiments of Professor Simon Crowe in encouraging all members to contribute generously to this fund again as part of the 2012 membership renewal in May. It is wonderful for members to see a direct correlation between their generosity and the Society's capacity to support more students. It is our hope that with the continued support of members and the APS National Office, that an even greater number of awards can be available in 2013 and beyond. We are reminded that we still have a long way to go:

*In the context of the APS Reconciliation Action Plan, the establishment of the bursaries is one response to the need to accelerate the growth in the numbers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander psychologists if we are to approach parity (2.5% of the Australian population and the profession) any time this century. Australian psychology did not produce its first Aboriginal graduate until 1987, and in the 20 years to 2007 it had graduated an average of 2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander psychologists per year, to the current total registered of around 40. The Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association has calculated that at this rate, it would take another 293 years to graduate sufficient Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander psychologists to achieve parity within the existing psychology workforce. <http://www.psychology.org.au/Content.aspx?ID=4084>*

### **Indigenous Student Mentor Program**

Having been invited by the APS National Office to take part in the selection process for the above-mentioned APS Awards for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, the ATSIPP Committee has also been asked to co-ordinate the provision of a mentor for each of the three recipients. In addition to the provision of funds aimed to allow students to focus on their studies, we highlighted the importance of providing support, guidance and encouragement to our Indigenous postgraduate psychology students as they complete their studies and set out on their pathway to a career in psychology. The intention of the Mentoring Program is not to replace the support offered within universities but to help to develop a positive link within the Society. The need for student mentoring was highlighted in the ATSIPP AGM last year and incorporated into our Action Plan for 2012, with the long term aim of offering the provision of mentoring to all Indigenous psychology students. This goal seems to be consistent with the aims of the original Group for Aboriginal Issues, Aboriginal People and Psychology as it was established primarily as a way of assisting Indigenous members to the Society to network and promote discussion of social issues with non-Indigenous members. Themes of affirmative action, mentoring and support are also reflected in the 'Mind Map of the APS Reconciliation Action Plan' and are therefore in keeping with the overall direction of the Society. Heather Gridley has consulted with each of the Award Recipients and all three are keen to be linked in with a mentor as soon as possible, particularly given that the academic year is well under way. A profile of each student is featured in the April edition of *InPsych* and will outline information about university locations and thesis topics.

Given your experience in and dedication to this field, we are delighted to offer ATSIPP Members the opportunity to register their interest in nominating as a mentor. It is envisaged that mentors and students will be matched as closely as possible to area of interest, and location, although Skype, email and telephone may be used where face to face meetings may not be possible. At this stage, information provided by members will be used to help each of the three students select an appropriate mentor with a Committee Member assisting an initial meeting via teleconference. With the permission of IG members, we would like to keep all unused nominations on a database to be used for matching students with mentors in the future, bearing in mind that your name can be removed at any stage should your circumstances change. The APS National Office also receives occasional requests for tutors for Indigenous psychology students, and research suggests this is one of the most valuable ways of assisting students to persist with and successfully complete their psychology studies. Prospective mentors or tutors are asked to complete the following information and email to [kylie\\_cann@bigpond.com](mailto:kylie_cann@bigpond.com) by the end of April.

<b>Name and Grade of Membership</b>	<b>Area of Interest/ Expertise</b>	<b>Time Available Eg 1 hour per f/night</b>	<b>Location ie Local Branch</b>	<b>Preferred Method of Contact</b>



## ATSIPP MEMBERS INPUT

### Indigenous Hearing Loss

Dr Damien Howard is a teacher and PhD psychologist specialising in the impacts of Indigenous hearing loss. He has spent many years investigating the social effects of conductive hearing loss and auditory processing problems and acting on the results of these investigations to try and make life better for the people who are affected by them.

As you will recall, ATSIPP members were emailed details about Damien's presentation to the Victorian Bar held in Melbourne in March, entitled *Indigenous Hearing Loss and Access to Justice*. Issues discussed included: problems with taking instructions and examining witnesses who may have hearing loss; the link between hearing impairment and criminal activity; communication difficulties between authorities and Indigenous persons who may have hearing loss as well as what Australian and Victorian courts are doing to address these issues. From those who were able to attend, we received very positive feedback about the presentation and the relevance of this issue for ATSIPP members. For members who were unable to attend the lecture held in Melbourne, Damien's interview with the Central Australian Indigenous Media Association (CAAMA) on the same topic may be of interest. <http://caama.com.au/tag/dr-damien-howard>

Damien has also kindly provided the following links in order that ATSIPP members can read the journal article and news snippets on the massive level of hearing loss amongst Indigenous inmates in the NT.

[http://www.ilc.unsw.edu.au/sites/ilc.unsw.edu.au/files/articles/ILB%207-28%20Hearing%20Loss%20-%20Vanderpoll\\_Howard.pdf](http://www.ilc.unsw.edu.au/sites/ilc.unsw.edu.au/files/articles/ILB%207-28%20Hearing%20Loss%20-%20Vanderpoll_Howard.pdf)

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/hearing-loss-hits-nt-Indigenous-inmates-20120304-1ub4x.html>

Damien has also developed a unique and highly practical website entitled *Hear This: Supporting Aboriginal learners and employees who have hearing loss*. The website outlines the specific nature of hearing loss as it relates to Indigenous populations, outlines implications for employers, families and learning and also provides links to media resources, interviews with people who have experienced hearing loss and culturally-appropriate books for children available to download.

<http://www.hstac.com.au/HearThis/>

Other general resources relevant for families of children with *Otitis Media and Conductive Hearing Loss* include:

<http://www.eartroubles.com/attachments/Mainstream%20family%20information.pdf>

<http://www.eartroubles.com/index.php/DEFAULT>

Damien also provides training and consultancy around hearing loss. In particular, his focus is on the psychosocial issues surrounding hearing loss and his training packages aim to help reduce the risk of social, educational and occupational problems related to conductive hearing loss and auditory processing problems. Training can be provided face to face, via the internet or through internet and teletraining. For an example of his training packages visit:

<http://www.eartroubles.com/attachments/psycho-social%20issues%20in%20hearing%20loss%20for%20VCS2.pdf>

Finally, for a presentation outlining implications for psychologists, the psychological impact of hearing loss and practical examples of how it relates to clients we may work with, listen to [http://flashstream1.jcu.edu.au/html/Jo\\_Wale\\_Seminar\\_030910.html](http://flashstream1.jcu.edu.au/html/Jo_Wale_Seminar_030910.html)

## APS MEDIA RELEASES

### **Time for action on Indigenous mental health Close the Gap Day, March 24**

Indigenous mental health continues to be overlooked, despite worrying statistics, according to Professor Patricia Dudgeon, a leading Aboriginal psychologist and member of the Government's new National Mental Health Commission.

#### **Indigenous mental health facts:**

- Death rates from suicide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males and females are over twice the rate for other Australian males and almost twice the rate for other Australian females – Mindframe.
- Nearly a third (31%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 18 years and over had experienced high/very high levels of psychological distress, which was more than twice the rate for non-Indigenous people - Australian Institute of Health & Welfare (AIHW) report, 2008.
- The rate of hospitalisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people diagnosed with mental disorders due to psychoactive substance use was four to five times higher than the rate for other Australians – Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2004.
- Depression has been identified as one of the six most frequent problems managed by GPs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients – AIHW, 2004.

<http://www.psychology.org.au/Content.aspx?ID=4208>

## IN THE NEWS

### **Australian Govt's Hearing Services Program - changes to eligibility for young Australians**

From 1 January 2012, young adults aged 21-25 years inclusive may be eligible for access to hearing services through the Community Service Obligations (CSO) component of the Australian Government's Hearing Services Program. Previously, access to the CSO ceased at age 21 years but will not cease on a client's 26th birthday. This extension will allow eligible hearing impaired young Australians to continue to access hearing services and support while they are studying, training or establishing their careers. <http://www.asohns.org.au/news/australian-govts-hearing-services-program-changes-to-eligibility-for-young-australians>

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### **Good intentions can often lead to Indigenous hell on earth**

Rio Tinto, the big mining conglomerate with operations stretched across the top end from the Pilbara in the west to the Argyle in the Kimberley to Weipa on Cape York, has an impressive record of Indigenous engagement and achievement that most branches of government can only envy. It certainly helps to be a multinational with deep pockets, but it also helps to be removed from bureaucratic face-saving and red tape. Nobody would claim Rio's record to be mint perfect. However, one salient fact stands out: it is the biggest employer of Indigenous labour in the nation with almost one in 10 employees Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders. That amounts to a workforce of 2000 men and women not including many more employed by private contractors.

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/political-news/good-intentions-can-often-lead-to-Indigenous-hell-on-earth-20120410-1wmup.html#ixzz1sDXy6F7T>

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## **\$825m to fund Indigenous protection program in NT**

The government will spend \$825 million over the next decade to make Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory safer and to boost basic services in the most remote areas.

Legislation to extend elements of the intervention for 10 years beyond their expiry this year has passed the House of Representatives and is being considered by the Senate. The proposals would extend alcohol and pornography restrictions, compulsory income management and limits on the consideration of cultural practices and customary law in bail and sentencing decisions. The legislation also includes measures to suspend the welfare of people whose children have poor school attendance.

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/political-news/825m-to-fund-Indigenous-protection-program-in-nt-20120328-1vyrm.html#ixzz1sDa06aVK>

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## **Rally over Aboriginal legislation**

Opponents of the Northern Territory intervention will today visit Parliament to demand the Gillard government withdraw proposals to extend some of the measures by a further 10 years.

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/political-news/rally-over-aboriginal-legislation-20120320-1vi0i.html#ixzz1sDd6Ka5e>

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## **36.7 per cent and rising - the rate of our children in Queensland's child protection system**

The Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak body (QATSICPP) says the gap in child protection outcomes for the state's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children continues to widen at an alarming rate.

<http://www.snaicc.asn.au/news-events/fx-view-article.cfm?loadref=32&id=782>

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## **Nation on track to meet Indigenous targets - PM**

The nation is making progress in reducing infant mortality and improving educational achievement for Aboriginal children, but must redouble efforts to close the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, the Prime Minister told Parliament yesterday.

Delivering its annual report on progress on tackling Indigenous disadvantage, Julia Gillard said the government was on track to meet its targets of halving the gap in mortality rates for children under 5 by 2018, and to provide access to early childhood education to all Indigenous 4-year-olds in remote communities by next year.

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/political-news/nation-on-track-to-meet-Indigenous-targets--pm-20120215-1t6s1.html#ixzz1sDb0AlkF>

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## **Government pledges to act on Aboriginal youth suicide**

The federal government is backing recommendations in a report into youth suicide in the Northern Territory.

The Gone Too Soon report, released by a select committee of NT politicians, found specialist police, youth workers and mental health staff were needed in at-risk areas to help stem the high rate of young people killing themselves.

Young people in the Northern Territory are 3.5 times more likely than the national average to commit suicide, with Aboriginal deaths accounting for 75 per cent of all child suicides between 2007 and 2011.

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/political-news/government-pledges-to-act-on-aboriginal-youth-suicide-20120328-1vxje.html#ixzz1sDbugi5B>

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### **Saving lives**

**[WHO] Whitelion co-founder and chief executive Mark Watt**

**[WHAT] Breaking the cycle of disadvantage that lands people in the juvenile justice system**

**[HOW] Mentoring, education, training, jobs, and connection to community salvage young people's lives**

Mark Watt knows mentoring, support and targeted care can save the life of a disadvantaged young person. It saved his. Now he's doing the same thing for thousands of at-risk youths, many of whom have already got into such difficulty they are in some form of detention.

Each year in Australia there are more than 46,000 child protection cases, almost 36,000 young people in out-of-home care and 14,500 young people in the court system. The situation is particularly stark for Indigenous youth. As many as 50 per cent of young people in detention are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, even though only 5 per cent of young Australians are Indigenous.

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/politics/saving-lives-20120415-1x1yx.html#ixzz1sDfRHY7f>

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### **Tone deaf in a popularity contest**

Where would you rank opera in a list of arts and cultural funding priorities in Australia today? Above literature and the nation's novelists? Above our visual artists? Above our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists? Would you place it ahead of investing in contemporary forms such as design, contemporary music and video games?

In fact, Australia - through our national arts funding body, the Australia Council - values opera above all those forms.

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/tone-deaf-in-a-popularity-contest-20100924-15qhc.html#ixzz1sDgpUtZ7>

## GRANTS

### Expansion of Teleweb Measures

E-Mental Health Measure expansion of the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) Telephone Counselling, Self Help and Web-based Support Programmes (Teleweb) Measure

#### Closing date

2:00 pm on 15 May 2012

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/grantDoHA2791112>

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### Improving Safety at 'Hotspots'

Under the Mental Health: Taking Action to Tackle Suicide package, the Australian Government has committed \$12 million funding over four years (2011-2014), for the Improving safety at 'hotspots' measure. A suicide hotspot is a specific site which is frequently used as a location for suicide and which provides either the means or an opportunity for suicide. The purpose of the Improving safety at 'hotspots' measure is to reduce the risk of suicide at such locations through the implementation of capital works. Program Guidelines can be found at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/mental-hotspots-guide>

#### Closing date

2:00 pm on 30 April 2012

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/grantDoHA2231112>

## SCHOLARSHIPS

### Nursing & Allied Health Scholarship and Support Scheme

Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health (SARRAH) administers the Allied Health Streams of the Nursing and Allied Health Scholarship and Support Scheme (NAHSSS). Funding is provided by the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) and this national program supports health professionals and future health professionals to train and practice in geographic and clinical areas of need. The specific objectives of the NAHSSS are to:

- Increase the workforce by encouraging young people to pursue a career in allied health;
- Support allied health professionals to undertake continuing professional development; and
- Encourage health careers in geographic areas and professions where there are shortages.

SARRAH manages five allied health scholarship streams under the NAHSSS, including Undergraduate Scholarship, Clinical Placement Scholarship, Postgraduate Scholarship, Continuing Professional Development Scholarship and Clinical Psychology Scholarship.

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Applicants**

SARRAH is committed to supporting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health workforce through the NAHSSS. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals are strongly encouraged to apply for scholarships at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

<http://www.sarrah.org.au/site/index.cfm?display=250845>

## **REPORTS**

### **Hear us: Inquiry into hearing health in Australia**

One in six Australians suffers from some degree of hearing loss. By 2050 this is forecast to grow to one Australian in four. Hearing health is a mainstream health issue which touches the lives of most Australians in one way or another, yet as a public health issue it is not ranked as a national health priority. Australians with hearing loss must live with the paradox that their disability is so prevalent in our community, and yet suffers from a generally low level of awareness and understanding.

<http://apo.org.au/research/hear-us-inquiry-hearing-health-australia>

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### **Ear and hearing health of Indigenous children in the Northern Territory Australian Institute of Health and Welfare**

10 November 2011 This report presents findings from the audiology and Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) follow-up services provided to children in prescribed areas of the Northern Territory as part of the Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory National Partnership Agreement. Between August 2007 and May 2011, 7,421 audiology and 3,838 ENT services were provided to 4,993 and 2,670 children respectively. About 66% were diagnosed with at least one type of middle ear condition, and of children who were tested, 11% had moderate, severe or profound hearing impairment.

<http://apo.org.au/research/ear-and-hearing-health-Indigenous-children-northern-territory>

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### **Listening but not hearing: a response to the NTER Stronger Futures Consultations June to August 2011 Alistair Nicholson and others Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning Research Unit**

09 March 2012. This report evaluates whether the Stronger Futures consultation process complies with Australia's obligations under international law to consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in relation to decisions that affect them. The Stronger Futures consultation process was conducted on a large scale in over 100 Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory between June and August 2011, culminating in the Stronger Futures Bills currently before the Australian Parliament. This report reviews the consultation process in the pre-consultation, consultation and post-consultation stages, including analysis of transcripts of a representative sample of consultation meetings.

<http://apo.org.au/research/listening-not-hearing-response-nter-stronger-futures-consultations-june-august-2011>

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### **'Listen to children' – the 2011 child rights NGO report Australian Child Rights Task Force**

22 July 2011. Despite ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991, this report finds that Australia has not effectively incorporated human rights into policy and legislative frameworks to nurture and support children. Instead, successive governments have perpetuated a traditional welfare approach to children's wellbeing and have not learned to listen to and work with children—to create child-sensitive bodies, systems and initiatives.

<http://apo.org.au/research/listen-children-%E2%80%93-2011-child-rights-ngo-report>

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### **Closing the gap Prime Minister's report 2012 Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs**

27 February 2012. The Prime Minister reports annually on progress in Closing the Gap. This is the fourth annual report, tabled in Parliament on 15 February 2012. According to the report: "This Closing the Gap report shows that the foundations for overcoming Indigenous disadvantage are now in place. It demonstrates how governments are delivering investments that will make a significant difference over the long term. It shows that Indigenous people are actively engaging with government and taking responsibility for making changes in their lives."

<http://apo.org.au/research/closing-gap-prime-ministers-report-2012>

## **WEBSITES & RESOURCES**

### **Remote Cross-Cultural Website**

As well as the information provided on hearing loss, ATSIPP Interest Group members may also find Damien Howard's Remote Cross-Cultural website highly relevant to their work. Damien has written and published information and a wide range of resources for people working and living in remote cross-cultural contexts in Australia. Topics include *Mixed Messages* and how this relates to cross-cultural management, *Wellbeing of Indigenous and non-Indigenous workers*, *Communication Planning* and how to minimise the effects on communication and widespread hearing loss, *Back from the Bush* outlining what people experience returning from working in remote cross-cultural contexts and *Hearing Loss*. The website includes resource files that can be downloaded as well as those available for purchase.

<http://remote.crosscultural.googlepages.com/>

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### **The Australian Indigenous Health Bulletin**

The Australian Indigenous Health *Bulletin* facilitates access to information of relevance to Australian Indigenous health and aims to keep people informed of current events of relevance, as well as information about recent research. The Health *Bulletin* is published as four cumulative issues per year.

The contents of the January to March 2012 issue of the Australian Indigenous Health*Bulletin* can now be accessed online via the archives

[http://www.healthinfolnet.ecu.edu.au/uploads/yarning\\_docs/12\(1\).pdf](http://www.healthinfolnet.ecu.edu.au/uploads/yarning_docs/12(1).pdf)

The April to June 2012 issue of the Australian Indigenous Health*Bulletin* is now 'in progress' and available online at [www.healthbulletin.org.au](http://www.healthbulletin.org.au). The team at the Australian Indigenous Health*InfoNet* invite assistance and contributions in making the Australian Indigenous Health*Bulletin* as useful as possible. If you would like to give feedback or notify the team about events information relating to sections of the Health*Bulletin*, email [healthbulletin@ecu.edu.au](mailto:healthbulletin@ecu.edu.au).

## DISCUSSION PAPERS

### Working to prevent and reduce racism in Australia

The Australian Human Rights Commission has been asked by the Australian Government to lead the development and delivery of the National Anti-Racism Strategy.

A Secretariat has been established within the Race Discrimination Team of the AHRC. The Secretariat has commenced consultations with non-government organisations and community leaders, and has launched a discussion paper seeking community views.

There are three ways you can contribute to the National Anti-Racism Strategy - by making a submission in response to the Discussion Paper, by completing the online survey or by participating in a public meeting.

The Strategy is expected to be launched around July 2012 with implementation of the strategy rolled out over three years, 2012-2015.

<http://www.humanrights.gov.au/antiracism/>

## JOURNAL ARTICLES

**Vanderpoll, T., & Howard, D., (2012). Massive Prevalence of Hearing Loss among Aboriginal Inmates in the Northern Territory. *Indigenous Law Bulletin*, January/February, ILB Volume 7, Issue 28**

One little considered factor in the substantial over representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system is the widespread hearing loss amongst Aboriginal adults that is a result of endemic childhood ear disease. Over the last 30 years there has been a growing concern about endemic ear disease and subsequent hearing loss among Aboriginal children in the health and education sectors, however, little attention has been paid to the impact of widespread hearing loss on Aboriginal adults.

[http://www.ilc.unsw.edu.au/sites/ilc.unsw.edu.au/files/articles/ILB%207-28%20Hearing%20Loss%20-%20Vanderpoll\\_Howard.pdf](http://www.ilc.unsw.edu.au/sites/ilc.unsw.edu.au/files/articles/ILB%207-28%20Hearing%20Loss%20-%20Vanderpoll_Howard.pdf)



## **Deadly Ears Program**

With 91% of Indigenous children suffering from some form of middle ear problem the Deadly Ears program in Queensland is trying to address the issue. In a recent edition of Surgical News (Vol.11 No. 7) the program and its implications were discussed.

<http://www.asohns.org.au/outreach/SN%20August%202010%20FINAL%20lo-res.pdf/view>

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## **A pilot study of Aboriginal health promotion from an ecological perspective Rachel E. Reilly and others, BMC Public Health**

17 October 2011. For health promotion to be effective in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities, interventions (and their evaluation) need to work within a complex social environment and respect Indigenous knowledge, culture and social systems. At present, there is a lack of culturally appropriate evaluation methods available to practitioners that are capable of capturing this complexity. As an initial response to this problem, we used two non-invasive methods to evaluate a community-directed health promotion program, which aimed to improve nutrition and physical activity for members of the Aboriginal community of the Goulburn-Murray region of northern Victoria, Australia.

The study addressed two main questions. First, for members of an Aboriginal sporting club, what changes were made to the nutrition environment in which they meet and how is this related to national guidelines for minimising the risk of chronic disease? Second, to what degree was the overall health promotion program aligned with an ecological model of health promotion that addresses physical, social and policy environments as well as individual knowledge and behaviour?

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/11/749>

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## **Hay, P.J., & Carriage, C. (2012) Eating Disorder Features in Indigenous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian Peoples, BMC Public Health**

### **Background**

Obesity and related cardiovascular and metabolic conditions are well recognized problems for Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. However, there is a dearth of research on relevant eating disorders (EDs) such as binge eating disorder in these groups.

### **Conclusions**

Whilst results on small numbers must be interpreted with caution, the main finding was consistent over the two samples. For First Australians ED symptoms are at least as frequent as for non-Indigenous Australians.

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/12/233/abstract>

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**Syron, M., & McLaughlin, J., Indigenous Knowledges: informing and supporting Indigenous students during their first year at university, Oodgeroo Unit, Chancellery, Queensland University of Technology**

**Abstract**

This paper critically examines dominant discourses informing First Year Experience programs delivered for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students participating in higher education. We interrogate traditional 'deficit models' through the recognition and acknowledgement of Indigenous knowledge at the cultural interface, the arena in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students encounter university for the first time.

In this paper, we demonstrate how the First Year Experience programs for Indigenous students, developed and delivered by the Oodgeroo Unit, are conceptualised by Indigenous knowledges. By recognising Indigenous knowledges and experiences, and valuing these within the Western academy, we provide an alternative to these dominant mainstream discourses and perspectives for Indigenous students navigating their way through university. We argue that Indigenous standpoints provide tools through which Indigenous students can negotiate the cultural interface that exists within the university environment.

[http://www.fyhe.com.au/past\\_papers/papers10/content/pdf/13A.pdf](http://www.fyhe.com.au/past_papers/papers10/content/pdf/13A.pdf)

## **PRACTICE ISSUES**

### **Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice**

A very important resource that is well worth the time and effort to read. Although this is a Mental Health Resource all chapters are very applicable in regards to Cultural knowledge and understanding in working towards creating a Culturally Safe Work Environment.

[http://www.ichr.uwa.edu.au/files/user5/Working\\_Together\\_book\\_web.pdf](http://www.ichr.uwa.edu.au/files/user5/Working_Together_book_web.pdf)

<http://aboriginal.childhealthresearch.org.au/kulunga-research-network/working-together.aspx>

## **UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **DR TRACY WESTERMAN'S 2012 WORKSHOPS**

Dr Westerman is a recognised leader in Aboriginal Suicide Prevention and Mental Health. She is one of the most sought after trainers across the country with her workshops sold out each time they are delivered. She has personally trained over 9,000 individuals Australia wide. Dr Westerman is a descendant of the Nyamal people near Port Hedland, WA. She holds a Post Graduate Diploma (Science, UWA) in Psychology, a Masters Degree (Clinical Psychology, Curtin University) and a Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical and Health Psychology).

Her award winning Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) research provided a much needed evidence base regarding the role of culture in the development, maintenance and treatment of mental illness for Aboriginal people. Her ongoing research and practice has continued to validate and develop a number of unique Aboriginal mental health training programs, psychological tests, assessment protocols, service delivery models and

Whole of Aboriginal Community Mental Health and Suicide Intervention Programs. Her public training programs are delivered every two years in most capital cities and occasionally in major regional centres throughout Australia.

**Mental Health Assessment of Aboriginal Clients 2 Day Workshop**  
ENDORSED by the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association  
**The only workshop in Australia able to measure and develop Aboriginal Mental Health Cultural Competencies\***  
&  
**Suicide Prevention in Aboriginal Communities 1.5 Day Workshop**

\*REGISTER EARLY - THESE WORKSHOPS ARE REGULARLY SOLD OUT MONTHS PRIOR TO THE WORKSHOP DATES

\*REGISTER FOR BOTH WORKSHOPS AND RECEIVE A DISCOUNT

<http://www.Indigenousspsychservices.com.au/trainingworkshops.php>

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

**4th Australian rural and remote mental health symposium, 19-21 Nov 2012, Adelaide, South Australia**

This symposium will explore national and state initiatives and programs that address people's needs, now and in the future. It will feature a broad range of presenters who will report how their programs are 'putting people first' and what their research indicates for the future.

Keynote speakers will address recent developments and future initiatives including (but not limited to) the benefits of the implementation of the National Broadband Network, the impact on e-health programs, and the establishment of the Australasian Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health.

This symposium will also include workshops to develop skills related specifically to the mental health needs of rural and remote communities, and ways to effectively prepare mental and other health professionals to meet future challenges.

**Abstracts close Monday 23 July 2012**

[http://anzmh.asn.au/rrmh/call\\_papers.html](http://anzmh.asn.au/rrmh/call_papers.html)

**CONFERENCES**

**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

Primary Health Care (PHC) Research Conference, 18-20 July 2012, Canberra

The theme of the conference is *Inform, influence, implement: research improving policy and practice*. Keynote speakers include:

- Dr Judith Smith - Head of Policy, Nuffield Trust, London, UK
- Emeritus Professor J Campbell Murdoch - East Otago Health, Otago, NZ
- Dr Carolyn Clancy - Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), Washington DC, USA
- Dr Clancy

- Mark Booth - First Assistant Secretary, Primary and Ambulatory Care Division, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

<http://www.phcris.org.au/conference/2012/>

**Early bird registrations close 25 May 2012**

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## **SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

National Rural Health Conference, 7-10 April **2013**, Adelaide

The main focus of the conference is on those who are involved in rural, regional and remote health every day: the consumers, clinicians, managers and researchers in non-metropolitan areas. Participants will also come from other sectors that contribute to the health of people in country Australia, such as education, the environment, transport, housing, economic development and community services. The conference aims to recognise the roles played by people involved in these sectors, to widen the view of the rural and remote health community and to give depth and greater effectiveness to the endeavours to improve rural health. The conference aims to:

- showcase developments on the ground,
- strengthen networks of consumers, providers and researchers,
- provide an opportunity for research reports to be delivered by both experienced and beginning researchers,
- encourage information dissemination and the development of policies and service systems,
- anticipate developments and issues and help set the sector's agenda,
- promote greater public awareness of rural and remote health issues.

<http://nrha.org.au/12nrhc/>

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## **VICTORIA**

Aboriginal health conference, 24-25 May 2012, Melbourne

The Aboriginal Health Branch will be hosting a major two-day Aboriginal health conference. The conference will showcase excellent and innovative Victorian and national projects that are working to close the life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. The conference aims to inform and inspire delegates through:

- defining the context of Aboriginal health in Victoria
- outlining the priority areas and enablers for better health outcomes
- demonstrating the value of investment in Aboriginal health
- work-shopping ways to close the health gap (it's not easy but not impossible)
- sharing the experience of innovative and excellent work happening in Victoria; and
- learning how better health outcomes are being achieved for Aboriginal people.

Standard Registration rate is \$500.00 from 1 April to 3 May 2012

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/aboriginalhealth/conference/registration.htm>

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## **WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

47th Annual Australian Psychological Society Conference, 27-30 September 2012, Perth.

The theme for this year's conference focuses on the contribution that psychology – as a discipline and profession – makes to addressing the current and future challenges of the modern age for individuals and society.

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

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## **WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol (NIDAC) conference, 6-8 June 2012, Fremantle

The conference is organised by the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee (NIDAC). The theme of the conference is *Beyond 2012: leading the way to action*. It will aim to highlight how the sector is able to lead the way to action in addressing the harmful effects of alcohol and other drugs and its associated harms among Indigenous Australians. The conference will provide an opportunity to:

- showcase innovative programs that are making a difference
- explore new ideas and ways that can be taken forward into action
- learn about new evidenced based interventions
- develop strongly connected networks

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

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## **WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

First Western Australian Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health Conference, 28-29 June 2012, Perth

The Aboriginal Maternity Services Support Unit and the Aboriginal Child Health Project present this conference. The conference is an opportunity for those who work in partnership with Aboriginal families to share stories about the successes and the challenges in Closing the Gap in Aboriginal maternal and child health. This conference aims to celebrate positive achievements in improving health outcomes for Aboriginal families.

[http://www.healthnetworks.health.wa.gov.au/docs/Aboriginal\\_Maternal\\_Child\\_Health\\_2012.pdf](http://www.healthnetworks.health.wa.gov.au/docs/Aboriginal_Maternal_Child_Health_2012.pdf)

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## **NORTH QUEENSLAND**

Suicide and self-harm prevention conference, 13-15 June 2012, Cairns

This conference is organised by the Dr Edward Koch Foundation, which aims to promote and initiate innovative and preventative educational programs to improve the health of the community. The Foundation is closely associated with Queensland Health's Tropical Population Health Unit, The University of Queensland Cairns Campus and James Cook University. Conference themes include:

- new concepts and methods in suicide prevention
- new concepts and methods in self-harm prevention

- new concepts and methods in post suicide support
- identifying and addressing risk factors for suicide
- suicide prevention in Indigenous communities
- suicide prevention in remote communities
- suicide prevention in high-risk employment categories (including mining, construction, agriculture and other fields)
- suicide prevention in disaster recovery areas.

[http://www.kochfoundation.org.au/suicide\\_conference\\_2012.html](http://www.kochfoundation.org.au/suicide_conference_2012.html)

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## **QUEENSLAND**

2<sup>nd</sup> National Cannabis Conference, 20-21 September 2012, Brisbane

The topic areas will respond to the developing evidence-base on issues such as cannabis and mental health. The emerging areas to be featured will include cannabis use and intervention approaches among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, school based approaches to preventing and reducing cannabis use, the role of genetics in cannabis use and dependence, the relationship between cannabis and tobacco, synthetic cannabinoids, and promising approaches to cannabis and comorbid mental health conditions. The conference will include perspectives from health, education, youth services and criminal justice sectors.

There will be workshops on Wednesday followed by the 2 day conference on Thursday and Friday which mixes national and international keynote speakers, free papers, datablitz, posters and social and networking opportunities.

<http://ncpic.org.au/ncpic/events/cannabis-conference-2012/>

**Early bird closes Friday 17 August 2012**

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## **QUEENSLAND**

International Network of Indigenous Health Knowledge and Development (INIHKD) 5th biennial conference, 24-28 September 2012, Brisbane

Remarkable similarities in health status, epidemiology, key health issues, trends in health and disease and the causal syndemic factors that underlie these findings are evident in Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Maori, Canadian Aboriginal, Kanaka Maoli, American Indian and Alaska Native peoples. There are also some striking differences relating to these factors. In response to demands, each colonial government has initiated health programmes. The policies and strategies used to impact Indigenous health have varied, as have the results. We believe that there is much to be learned from sharing each other's approaches, experiences and results. An International Network in Indigenous Health Knowledge and Development will provide this opportunity. The theme of this conference is *Building resilience: renewing individuals, families and communities*.

<http://www.inihkd.org/>



## **Early Bird Registration closes Friday 4 May 2012**

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### **TASMANIA**

Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health (SARRAH) National Conference, 20-23 September 2012, Launceston

The conference provides a forum for the rural and remote allied health workforce, bureaucrats, educators and consumers to:

- present on innovative local solutions to issues that can be applied to address similar issues nationally and across disciplines
- have input and influence from the grassroots' into national and state health policy and service delivery
- demonstrate rural and remote allied health leadership in workforce and service delivery innovation
- promote continuing education and professional development activities essential to support allied health professional practice in rural and remote Australia
- promote rural and remote allied health research by professionals who practice in these areas and the presentation of research findings
- develop supportive networks
- promote good health and wellbeing through the delivery of allied health services to and by Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in rural communities.

<http://sarrah.org.au/site/index.cfm?display=259112>

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### **NEW ZEALAND**

International Indigenous development research conference, 27-30 June 2012, Auckland

This conference will be all-encompassing and multi-disciplinary, welcoming Indigenous scholars from many different research fields and many nations to come together and share knowledge, develop ideas and create innovative approaches to research. Working together, we can connect over our horizons and create future opportunities for Indigenous peoples worldwide. Themes include:

- Optimising Indigenous economic wellbeing - addressing issues, needs and opportunities arising in Māori and Indigenous communities leading to increased economic independence and self-determination.
- Healthy and thriving Indigenous families - addressing issues, needs and opportunities arising in Indigenous families leading to healthy, successful and thriving Indigenous families.
- Enhancing Indigenous distinctiveness - understanding the distinctive contributions that Indigenous communities - people, knowledge, assets, resources - do and may yet make to the world at large. Yielding opportunities for development that may not be sourced from any other community or population.

<http://www.Indigenousdevelopment2012.ac.nz/>

**Early Bird Registrations Close 23<sup>rd</sup> April**

## RURAL AND REMOTE UPDATES

### SHORT COURSES 2012

Did you know that the Centre for Remote Health (a joint centre of Flinders University and Charles Darwin University) offers a range of short courses for Remote Health workers and Remote Health Professionals? The courses are offered in a number of locations around Australia. These short courses can be undertaken as continuing professional development and many have been accredited for CPD points with professional organisations for Medical Practitioners, Nurses and Allied Health professionals. For more information and a list of courses offered, visit:

<http://www.crh.org.au/content/view/25/22/>

## DIARY DATES

### National Families Week 2012

National Families Week 2012 will be held from Tuesday 15 May to Monday 21 May 2012 (coinciding with UN International Day of Families on Tuesday 15 May).

Each year, tens of thousands of people and hundreds of organisations celebrate National Families Week - Australia's annual celebration of families. The aim of National Families Week 2012 is to celebrate the vital role that families play. This year's theme is *Families make all the difference: helping kids to grow and learn*.

In National Families Week 2012, everyone is encouraged to think about the valuable role families play in helping children to develop, learn and grow, and reflect on the influence families have on a child's wellbeing.

<http://www.familiesaustralia.org.au/familiesweek/>

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### National Reconciliation Week, 27 May – 3 June 2012

Reconciliation Australia is the peak body promoting reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. The theme for National Reconciliation Week this year will be *Let's talk recognition!* with a particular focus on constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Mark Olive is one of the NRW Ambassadors this year as well as kitchen guru Stephanie Alexander.

<http://reconciliation.org.au/nrw>

In the spirit of the APS' Reconciliation Action Plan, we would love to hear your stories or plans for National Reconciliation Week in order that we can share them with other members. Email [Reconciliation\\_aps@psychology.org.au](mailto:Reconciliation_aps@psychology.org.au). Visit the Events Calendar on the Reconciliation Australia website for ideas and get involved!