



**Public Health Association of Australia  
(WA Branch)  
WA PHAA NEWSLETTER**

Welcome to the January 2010 PHAA newsletter.

**Message from the President**

**Why does Australia need to develop a sustainable population policy?**

The Public Health Association has a new policy on sustainable population, which states that it is unlikely that effective climate change improvement will be achieved without population stabilization. The policy recommends that the Australian Government immediately commission an inquiry into Australia's population policy options.

**Why is a sustainable population plan urgently needed?**

The Australian population is likely to grow to 35 million people by 2049 unless urgent actions are taken now.

International concerns about climate change/global warming have led to much publicity and political talk but with little tangible action. Controversy about global warming has been instigated by economist rationalists who claim it is part of a 'natural cycle'. But regardless of whether it is manmade or a natural cycle, the positive aspect of this publicity is a wakeup call for the world and Australia about the irreparable damage of environmental degradation and pollution. It has highlighted the need for urgent actions to combat pollution (*regardless* of global warming). Curbing population growth is touted by some experts as the single most important measure.

Warnings given over 40 years ago by Rachel Carson (*Silent Spring*), followed by a host of writings by concerned scientists in 1970s (Professors Barry Commoner, Paul Erlich, Dennis Pirages, Lester Brown etc) about environmental pollution and overpopulation fell on deaf ears and subsequent political inaction. Now that catastrophic environmental outcomes are imminent, it is time for our politicians at Federal, State and Local level, to *demonstrate leadership* in this important area.

There is now a need for a new breed of *enlightened MPs*. To date only a few politicians have shown any leadership in this area including Victorian MP Kelvin Thomson, Greens Senator Bob Brown, former NSW Premier Bob Carr, and current opposition spokesperson Kevin Andrews.

It is now critical that all our Federal and State Governments develop sustainable population plans with stabilisation of population growth as an option.

The plans must also ensure that the already vulnerable members of our communities (Indigenous people, pensioners, people with disabilities, recent migrants, non-English speaking people, single mothers, unemployed, homeless and other low income people) are not further disadvantaged by unsustainable population growth.

The plans must provide for adequate hospitals/healthcare, housing, schools/education, roads/transport, water, power and other amenities that are already severely overburdened in every city of Australia. There must be a guarantee that affordable housing will not become less likely for our young families. Priority must be given to training our young people and Indigenous people for employment.

These population plans must also consider that the single most effective way for Australia to reach its climate change targets is by putting the brakes on population growth.

We look to urgent leadership from our politicians to ensure a sensible approach to population growth.

The PHAA National Policy on Sustainable Population can be accessed via the PHAA website: [www.phaa.net.au](http://www.phaa.net.au)

**Peter Howat**  
**Past President PHAA (WA)**  
**PHAA Health Promotion Special Interest Group**  
**National Co-Convenor**

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION?**

**Do you have a contribution for the PHAA (WA) newsletter? Please forward to Laura Bond at [l.bond@curtin.edu.au](mailto:l.bond@curtin.edu.au) or Holly Scott at [hscott@icwa.org.au](mailto:hscott@icwa.org.au)**

## PHAA 2010 Conference

### DATE CLAIMER PHAA State Conference “Global Issues, Local solutions – Thinking outside the box”

*Tradewinds Hotel, East Fremantle*  
**18 –19 November 2010**

Based on the successful 2008 state conference, the PHAA is hosting another in 2010. The theme for the 2010 conference will seek to explore local solutions to global issues that are seriously impacting on the ability to live a healthy and long life. Equity, sustainable development and climate change, the lack of improvement in Indigenous health, chronic diseases and food security will be but a few of the topics discussed. Innovative solutions achieved or identified through local projects, ideas and research programs will be encouraged.

A call for abstracts will be released in March. Papers, posters and workshops will be accepted – so it is great time to start thinking about potential ideas now.

For information about the conference administration please contact Erin Phipps (Secretariat) on [ephipps@bigpond.com](mailto:ephipps@bigpond.com). For all other enquiries contact Melissa Stoneham (Conference Convenor) at [melissagiv@bigpond.com](mailto:melissagiv@bigpond.com).

**Dr Melissa Stoneham, Conference Convenor,  
PHAA (WA)**

### Healthway 2010 Visiting Fellow

Professor Kim Raine, will be visiting WA in April – May 2010 as the Healthway 2010 Visiting Fellow. Dr Raine is a Professor in the School of Public Health, University of Alberta, Canada. She has built a program of research that has received national and international recognition in the fields of community nutrition and health promotion. Specifically, her work is recognized for knowledge development in the areas of 1) social determinants of nutritional health, 2) qualitative and participatory methodologies in community health research, and 3) environmental and population-based intervention research for chronic disease prevention and promoting healthy weights.

Her visit to WA is being coordinated jointly by CBRCC at Curtin University and Cancer Council

WA, supported by several other community groups including the PHAA.

A program of seminars will be conducted in Perth and Albany, and will be available to all PHAA members free of charge. Details of the seminars including registration will be publicized over the next few months.

**Prof Peter Howat, Past President PHAA (WA)**

### Seminar: Dr Helen Caldicott

In July 2009, the PHAA hosted a lecture delivered by distinguished international speaker, Dr Helen Caldicott. Dr Caldicott is well known as a campaigner on nuclear issues, having been named as one of the most influential women of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. The title of her lecture was “Uranium mining: what are the health risks for WA?” The lecture was well attended with an audience numbering around 240. Dr Caldicott was supported by Barry Carbon, AM, and Dr Irene Kirczenow, WA Chair of Doctors for the Environment Australia. Both provided their own interesting and thought provoking perspectives on the issue of uranium mining.

**Louise Stewart, PHAA (WA)**



### Seminar: Lt Gen John Sanderson

In September 2009 the PHAA hosted a lecture by Lt Gen (Retd) John Sanderson, AC. Lt Gen Sanderson was formerly Chief of the Australian Army and Governor of Western Australia, and is currently the Chair of the Indigenous Implementation Board WA. In his present role, Lt Gen Sanderson has travelled extensively through WA, engaging Aboriginal people in conversation. His lecture was entitled “Improving Indigenous Health: What can we do?” Feedback from Lt Gen Sanderson’s presentation was very favourable. Assoc Prof Ted Wilkes kindly

delivered the welcome and introduction. The PHAA (WA) was fortunate in receiving sponsorship for the event from Curtin University, Edith Cowan University and UWA.

**Louise Stewart, PHAA (WA)**



### 2009 PHAA AGM

The PHAA WA Committee's AGM was held in November. Over 50 health professionals were in attendance. The President, Peter Howat provided a report for 2009 and the 2010 committee were elected with a number of new members joining the group. We farewell Carlie Jones who has dedicated much time and support to the Committee over the past two years.

The National President for the PHAA, Mike Daube, provoked thought about how to move forward and where our focus should be for public health in his presentation: 'Do we need a prevention revolution? Where next for public health'.

The 2009 PHAA Awards were presented to individuals and groups for excellence in public health.



### Student Awards

Presented to Kate Taylor (Curtin) and Dr Judy Katzenellenbogen (UWA)

### Community Group Award

The Cancer Council WA

### Community Individual Award

Professor Rob Donovan

### Indigenous Award

Heather D'Antoine (TICHR)

### Early Career Award

Jonathan Hallett (Curtin)

### Presidents Award

Professor Konrad Jamrozik

### Early Career Award Recipient

Previously based in the community sector, the transition to academic research has been an interesting one for Jonathan Hallett. His position with the WA Centre for Health Promotion Research at Curtin University saw him move from grassroots client-centred work with marginalised groups to intervention research building evidence for public health prevention initiatives. He has a BA, PostGradDip International Health, and is currently completing a PhD in Public Health based on the online intervention THRIVE.

The THRIVE project, which he oversaw from 2006-2008 with an inspired team of researchers, involved a randomised control trial of an innovative Internet-based alcohol screening and brief intervention. The intervention was developed as a brief motivational intervention consisting of an online assessment that delivered immediate and personalised feedback on drinking behaviour, risks and strategies for reducing consumption, and available support services. The online assessment was able to provide researchers with baseline data of the prevalence of hazardous drinking of over 7,000 students. Of these, 2393 were randomised into control or experimental groups which resulted in a statistically significant reduction in frequency and volume of alcohol consumed at 1 and 6 months; a reduction equivalent to the outcome reported of a Cochrane review of face-to-face brief motivational interviewing. The accessibility and reach of the Internet provides an opportunity to engage university students about their drinking behaviour at a larger scale than programs confined to on-campus health services and importantly accesses students who do not view their drinking as a problem (non-treatment seekers).

As a new researcher who is leading multiple publications from THRIVE, his articles have so far been published in: *Archives of Internal Medicine*; *Medical Journal of Australia*, *Drug and Alcohol*

*Review, and Global Health Promotion.* Jonathan is active in the Greens WA political party where he is a strong advocate for public health, and was a candidate at the last State election receiving one of the highest proportion of votes of his Party's candidates. He is deeply honoured to have received the early career award and looks forward to continuing his current work in reducing health inequities among young people and supporting the work of the not-for-profit sector.

**Jonathan Hallett (Curtin)**

### Public Health News Around the World

The PHAA develop and circulate media releases for articles in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health. These are available from: [www.phaa.net.au/journalMedia.php](http://www.phaa.net.au/journalMedia.php)

### UN Climate Change Conference

A non-binding accord reached has key elements including the goal to limit the maximum temperature rise to below 2 degrees Celsius; commitments from developed countries to list their emission reduction targets and developing countries to document mitigation actions for 2020; and funding for immediate and long-term financing.

Leaders now agree the next challenge is to turn outcomes into a legally binding agreement.

### AIHW Report: Expenditure on health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 2006-07

A recent AIHW report shows per person spending on health and high care residential aged care services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in 2006-07 was 22% higher than for non-Indigenous Australians. For the full report visit:

[www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2009/mr20091218.cfm](http://www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2009/mr20091218.cfm)

### Upcoming Conference and Professional Development Opportunities

Public Health Association Australia  
*Food Futures: An Australian Approach*  
20 - 21 April, 2010, Canberra

[www.phaa.net.au/FoodFuturesConference.php](http://www.phaa.net.au/FoodFuturesConference.php)

Australian Health Promotion Association 19th National Conference

*"Walking the Talk Together: Partnerships for Health Promotion"*

30 May – 2 June 2010, Melbourne

[www.conferenceco.com.au/AHPA/](http://www.conferenceco.com.au/AHPA/)

Inaugural National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Conference

*Listening, Learning & Leading*

16-18 June, 2010, Adelaide

[www.nidaconference.com.au/](http://www.nidaconference.com.au/)

20<sup>th</sup> IUHPE Conference on Health Promotion  
*Health, Equity and Sustainable Development*

11-15 July 2010, Geneva Switzerland

[www.iuhpeconference.net](http://www.iuhpeconference.net)

17<sup>th</sup> Western Australian Drug and Alcohol Symposium

*Hope, Hype or Hard Evidence?*

30 August - 1 September, 2010, Fremantle

[www.hhhe2010.com.au/](http://www.hhhe2010.com.au/)

10th World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion

*Safe and Equitable Communities*

21-24 September, 2010, London, UK

[www.safety2010.org.uk/](http://www.safety2010.org.uk/)

40th PHAA Annual Conference

*Public Health in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Society: New ways of knowing, doing, living*

27 - 29 September, 2010, Adelaide

[www.phaa.net.au/40thPHAAAnnualConference.php](http://www.phaa.net.au/40thPHAAAnnualConference.php)

Australian Health Promoting Schools Association, 8th National Conference

*"Connected Schools, Connected Communities"*

6 - 8 October, 2010, Burswood, Perth

Asia Pacific Conference on Tobacco or Health

*"Change, challenge & progress: FCTC in the Asia Pacific"*

6-9 October, 2010, Sydney

[www.apact2010.org](http://www.apact2010.org)

PHAA State Conference (WA)

*"Global Issues, Local solutions – Thinking outside the box"*

18 –19 November, 2010, East Fremantle