

PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
MEDIA RELEASE

www.phaa.net.au



Monday 4 April 2011

CONFERENCE PUSH TO ESTABLISH AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL

Public health experts and practitioners from around the country and eminent overseas visitors are coming together for the Public Health Association of Australia's (PHAA) Communicable Disease Control Conference in Canberra. The three day conference starts today, with a particular focus on the push to establish an Australian Centre for Disease Control (ACDC) to address new infectious disease threats across the country and the neighbouring region.

"Australia has a track record of positive outcomes in disease control. However, the pressures of globalisation, travel and environmental change have resulted in a complex and rapidly evolving infectious disease agenda. Modern and future communicable disease threats require a much more robust response capability than can be delivered through current systems and many experts now believe that a new agency is required. The aim of establishing an ACDC would be to provide strong central, expert driven leadership and coordination of national communicable disease control," said Michael Moore, Chief Executive Officer of PHAA.

"The issue of whether Australia needs a Centre for Disease Control will be discussed by key experts in the first plenary session at 11am today. PHAA and the Royal Australasian College of Physicians' Australasian Faculty of Public Health Medicine (AFPHM) have also released a report entitled '*Does Australia need a national Centre for Disease Control?*' to coincide with the conference," said Dr Steven Skov, Chair of the AFPHM Policy and Advocacy Committee.

Among the experts speaking on the opening day of the conference will be: Professor James F Bishop AO, Australia's Chief Medical Officer; Dr Theresa Tam from Canada's Centre for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control; and Dr Graham Tallis, a communicable disease expert working with the World Health Organization in Indonesia.

"The biennial conference is being held by PHAA in association with the Communicable Diseases Network Australia and the Public Health Laboratory Network, with around 300 delegates due to attend this year's event," said Mr Moore.

What: PHAA Communicable Disease Control Conference
Where: Hotel Realm, 18 National Circuit, Barton ACT
When: Monday 4 April 2011
Time: 9am – 5:30pm

For general comment on the conference:

Michael Moore, CEO, Public Health Association of Australia:

0417 249 731

For access to presenters for comment/interviews; copies of presentation abstracts; and/or further information on the conference:

Melanie Walker, Conference Media Contact:

0438 430 963

The report '*Does Australia need a national Centre for Disease Control?*' is available on the PHAA website at <http://www.phaa.net.au/documents/110329NationalCentreforDiseaseControldiscussionpaper.pdf> . An outline of the conference program is available on the PHAA website at: http://www.phaa.net.au/documents/CDC_Program2011.pdf .

Sponsors of the Communicable Disease Control Conference include: the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing; Baxter; CSL Biotherapies; GlaxoSmithKline; Sanofi Pasteur Pty Ltd; and Wyeth Vaccines – Australia.