



Contents

Leading health organisations outline vision for a national food and nutrition policy	1
Office Bearers	2
Announcing the 2009 NSW Public Health Impact Award winner: Professor Louise Baur	3
Guarding the sacred	4
In Gear for Timor-Leste: An organization cycles to help support their programs	5
Establishing Aboriginal health research priorities in Victoria	6
Understanding young minds: new accredited training program from beyondblue	7
Sponsors for the PHAA 39th Annual Conference	9
Welcome to New Members	18

Leading health organisations outline vision for a national food and nutrition policy

By Melanie Walker, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Public Health Association of Australia

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) and the Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) have launched a report that outlines a clear vision for a new national food and nutrition policy in Australia.

According to the leading health bodies, a comprehensive, broad-based food and nutrition policy is needed to address the range of issues that affect the health and well-being of Australians.

"PHAA and DAA recently brought together more than 30 stakeholders from the food, nutrition and health sectors to start talking about this issue – which is a key strategic priority for both organisations," said Michael Moore, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the PHAA.

The group developed the principles and vision outlined in the *Towards a National Food and Nutrition Policy* report.

"The vision for a new national food and nutrition policy should be to ensure a nutritious, secure and sustainable food supply for Australia's health, wellbeing and prosperity," said Claire Hewat, CEO of the DAA.

"The policy framework outlines key outcomes relating to health, the food supply, the community, the environment and the food industry. An effective food and nutrition policy needs 'buy-in' from all the key players – including the community and the government, non-government and industry sectors – to make sure these goals can be achieved," said Mr Moore.

"We all know that developing a policy in itself will not guarantee the outcomes outlined in the report. To change drink driving practices over time we've needed



Left to right: Christina Pollard, Melanie Walker and Michael Moore at the *Towards a National Food and Nutrition Policy* dialogue

continued on page 2



Leading health organisations outline vision for a

Continued from page 1

political will, community education and awareness, and cooperation from industry groups," said Mr Moore.

Ms Hewat said DAA wants all Australians to eat better and be healthier – and implementing a new whole of government national food and nutrition policy is a good place to start.

DAA and PHAA would like to thank Meat and Livestock Australia, Dairy Australia, Sanitarium and the Australian Food and Grocery Council for their sponsorship support of the *Towards a National Food and Nutrition Policy* dialogue event.

The *Towards a National Food and Nutrition Policy* report is available on the PHAA website at: www.phaa.net.au

Office Bearers

The Board

President

Mike Daube: m.daube@curtin.edu.au

Vice President - (Policy)

Sarah Thackway: sthac@doh.health.nsw.gov.au

Vice President - (Development)

Chris Morris: christine2.morris@health.sa.gov.au

Vice President - (Finance)

Gordon Lee Koo: leekoo@internode.on.net

SIG Convenors' representatives

Tony Butler: tbutler@curtin.edu.au

Bruce Simmons:

bruce.simmons@ozemail.com.au

Branch Presidents' representatives

Helen Keleher:

Helen.Keleher@med.monash.edu.au

Jane McQueen: jane.mcqueen@caac.org.au

ANZJPH Editors

Managing Editor - Jeanne Daly:

j.daly@bigpond.net.au

Senior Editor - John Lowe: jlowe@usc.edu.au

Editor - Priscilla Robinson:

priscilla.robinson@latrobe.edu.au

Editor - Sandra Thompson:

s.thompson@curtin.edu.au

Editor - Alistair Woodward:

a.woodward@auckland.ac.nz

Branch Presidents

ACT Gabrielle O'Kane:

Gabrielle.O'Kane@canberra.edu.au

NSW Sarah Thackway:

sthac@doh.health.nsw.gov.au

NT Jane McQueen: jane.mcqueen@caac.org.au

QLD Danette Langbecker:

danette76@optusnet.com.au

SA Jackie Street: Jackie.Street@adelaide.edu.au

TAS TBA

VIC Helen Keleher: Helen.Keleher@med.monash.edu.au

WA Peter Howat: p.howat@curtin.edu.au

Chief Executive Officer Michael Moore:

ph (02) 6285 2373, mmoore@phaa.net.au

SIG Convenors

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health

Peter Waples-Crowe: peterw@vaccho.com.au

Child Health

Naomi Priest: npriest@unimelb.edu.au

Environmental Health

Liz Hanna: Liz.Hanna@anu.edu.au

Food & Nutrition Co-convenors

Andrea Begley: A.Begley@curtin.edu.au &

Christina Pollard: C.Pollard@curtin.edu.au

Health Promotion

Peter Howat: p.howat@curtin.edu.au

Injury Prevention

Richard Franklin: rfranklin@rlssa.org.au

International Health Co-Convenors

Peter Vanderwal: peter@jta.org.au

Mental Health

Susan Humphries: susanhumph@hotmail.com

Oral Health

Bruce Simmons: bruce.simmons@ozemail.com.au

Political Economy of Health

Deborah Gleeson: dgleeson@latrobe.edu.au

Primary Health Care

Helen Keleher: Helen.Keleher@med.monash.edu.au

Prisoners' Health

Tony Butler: tbutler@curtin.edu.au

Women's Health Convenor

Jenny Ejlak: jenny_ejlak@yahoo.com.au

Announcing the 2009 NSW Public Health Impact Award winner: Professor Louise Baur

Sarah Thackway and Catriona Bonfiglioli, PHAA, NSW Branch

In July 2009, the NSW Branch of PHAA held its Annual General Meeting. About fifty people attended to acknowledge a year of achievements for the Branch. Professor Boyd Swinburn provided the annual address, discussing the challenges of obesity prevention.

At the same meeting the 12th anniversary of the NSW Public Health Impact Award was celebrated. The Award was initiated by the Branch in recognition of the outstanding contributions made by NSW practitioners to public health.

This year we received more nominations than in the past four years. All nominations were of extremely high calibre – demonstrating the growing list of dedicated and expert public health professionals in NSW committed to improving the health of the population and reducing health inequalities.

Nominations are assessed by a panel against the following criteria:

- Significant impact;
- Development of innovative solutions;
- A high degree of excellence;
- Overcoming substantial barriers;
- Documenting their efforts;
- Generating public and professional support for an initiative; and
- Promoting public health.

This year's winner is Professor Louise Baur, an academic paediatrician, who has campaigned for two decades to raise awareness of the impact of child and adolescent obesity.

Louise is a Professor in the Discipline of Paediatrics & Child Health, Director of the NSW Centre for Overweight and Obesity in the Prevention Research Centres at the University of Sydney and a consultant paediatrician (Director of Weight Management Services) at The Children's Hospital at Westmead. She is the Director of the Australasian Child & Adolescent Obesity Research Network and Chair of the International Obesity Task Force's (IOTF's) Working Group on Childhood Obesity.

Professor Baur is the Founding Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Pediatric Obesity, co-Chair of NSW Health's Aboriginal and Population Health Priority Taskforce and a Director of World Vision Australia.

Her current research interests include the prevention of childhood obesity, the antecedents of obesity, the metabolic syndrome in childhood, the complications of paediatric overweight and obesity and the effective management of obesity and related disorders in a variety of settings.

Since 2004, she has been a Chief Investigator on studies which have received over \$7.0 million in external peer-reviewed funding. She has published extensively in such journals as the Lancet, the BMJ, and other high impact publications.

Professor Baur's ability to communicate effectively with stakeholders at all levels and across the researcher-policy maker divide has encouraged debate and helped keep obesity on the public health agenda in NSW, across Australia and also internationally.



Professor Louise Baur

Guarding the sacred

Peter Tait, PHAA Environmental Health Special Interest Group

In Central Australian Aboriginal culture the imperative to maintain relationships through exchange is paramount. In only two situations may one refuse an ask: when the thing asked for belongs to someone else, and when it is essential to some bigger design or your survival. The Pintupi words for these concepts are *miyila* and *martupurra*.

In considering the environment in which we have evolved as a species, the web of natural systems, living and non-living, that support our existence are well captured by the concepts of *miyila* and *martupurra*. The environment doesn't belong in whole or in part to any one of us to take or give away, and it is essential to our survival. It could be said to be sacred, dedicated to a higher order of being: our continued existence.

How then as a public health community do we guard this sacred thing?

The scientific evidence for humanity undermining the foundations of its own society has been accumulating for half a century and was summed up neatly in 'Planetary Overload' by Tony McMichael in 1993 and more recently in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fourth Assessment Report. The more recent evidence however points to a more disturbing possibility; we are not just dirtying our nest but may be rapidly chopping off the branch our nest is on. Dealing with this threat to health and welfare has to be a priority.

Without diminishing the importance and urgency of addressing many other health and social justice issues, climate change needs high priority for a couple of reasons. Importantly, from a risk management perspective, if the modeling is even only fairly accurate, we have a reasonable probability of sending the biosphere into temperature ranges beyond those humans have evolved to live in. Prudence suggests we take action. From a social determinants viewpoint, many of the socioeconomic changes to mitigate and adapt to climate change also address the determinants of disparity and hence chronic disease. In short, a just, peaceful, more equitable and therefore healthier society can also be a more ecological sustainable one.

We are poised on the sill of the window of opportunity to take the decisive action needed to avert catastrophe. While the unraveling of society may take two or three centuries, action to prevent this has to happen in the next few years. In balancing the need to save lives from short term threats with the need to save our species from disaster in the longer term, the greater good is served by spending resources and effort now on averting the longer term danger.

In this context I invite the members of PHAA to consider and suggest how our organisation can best move forward to meet World Health Organization Director General Margaret Chan's 2008 challenge to be "champions ... who will work to put protecting human health at the centre of the climate change agenda." How can we guard the sacred, that which is for each of us both *miyila* and *martupurra*?

WHAT'S ON

National Short Courses in Environmental Health, Adelaide. Course 1 'Principles of Risk Assessment & Management' 23-27 Nov; Course 2 'Risk Communication in Practice: engaging the public' 30 Nov-2 Dec 2009.

For further details and applicatin forms check out the website: www.nsceh.com

In Gear for Timor-Leste: An organization cycles to help support their programs

Emma Sturrock, Project Assistant, Australian Aid International

The non profit, non-governmental organization, Australian Aid International (AAI), raced in the Tour de Timor, a 400 km bike race around Timor-Leste at the end of August to help support their primary health care projects in Timor-Leste.

The Tour de Timor brought local and international communities together to celebrate Timor-Leste as a country of peace. AAI trained for and rode in this gruelling challenge as a unique way of promoting their health programs and AAI's commitment to Timorese communities.

The state of health in Timor-Leste is the poorest in South East Asia. Rates of preventable and easily treatable diseases such as malaria are the highest in the region, largely because of limited medical infrastructure and inadequate access to remote areas.

"We're effectively racing against time to help limit disease in a poor nation where only half the population has access to drinking water. Maternal mortality and child malnutrition rates are unacceptably high," said Frank Tyler, Director of Operations for AAI.

Since March 2007, AAI has had volunteers working across Timor-Leste, particularly in Atauro, where it has helped establish more than 150 mobile medical outreach clinics and facilitated the majority of aero-medical evacuations to Dili.

Efforts to continue the program, that has helped conduct clinical consultations, provide medical education for local healthcare staff and obtain funding for a remote area nurse to work on Atauro Island, have been hampered in recent months due to a shortage of funds.



Health education conducted by AAI at the school in Vila

While AAI's programs on Atauro Island have come to a temporary halt, it is essential for Timorese communities to know that AAI has not given up on them and that they are committed to improving community capacity and health.

"It's important that Timor-Leste's story is told to Australian and international audiences, to raise critically needed awareness to assist communities who can't help themselves," Mr Tyler says. The Tour de Timor was a perfect opportunity to help share Timor-Leste's story.

The process of effectively planning and executing health programs does not come without its challenges. Like the terrain on the Tour de Timor, there will be bumps along the way and it is an uphill journey.

To read more about AAI's work in Timor-Leste and the Tour de Timor, please visit: <http://www.aai.org.au/>



Patient consultation and registration at Barauana by AAI staff members

Establishing Aboriginal health research priorities in Victoria

Bronwyn Fredericks, Karen Adams, Ray Mahoney and Rebecca Watson, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation



Ray Mahoney (Acting CEO, VACCHO) and Rebecca Watson (VACCHO Public Health Project Officer) at VACCHO's Melbourne Research Workshop, 5th August 2009.

The Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) is undertaking a project to build its capacity to effectively engage in Aboriginal health research in an equitable and productive way. VACCHO is the peak body agency for the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Sector in Victoria.

The *VACCHO Social Determinants Research Forum* project is seeking to develop a research agenda which is relevant to the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) in Victoria in an attempt to promote research which addresses the Social Determinants of Aboriginal Health. These determinants directly impact on ACCHO staff, governance structures and service delivery with Aboriginal communities.

The project funded by the Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health (CRAH) will define and prioritise the particular social determinants of health within localised contexts and refine research issues and questions. The focus

will be on discussing concepts and developing foundations for future work in the area.

In implementing the project, VACCHO has already hosted workshops in Bendigo and Melbourne that were attended by key representatives from the Victorian Aboriginal Health Sector. Further discussions with ACCHOs are scheduled. Dr Karen Adams and Dr Bronwyn Fredericks (Research Fellows at VACCHO), Mr Ray Mahoney (A/g VACCHO CEO) and Ms Rebecca Watson (Public Health Project Officer) are leading this process and will ensure the transfer of the information within VACCHO. A workshop will soon be held with representatives from all nine universities in Victoria in alignment with the core principles of the Toorong Marnong Victorian Higher Education Accord. This workshop will work towards promoting the inclusion of Social Determinants within Aboriginal health research and the need for effective research models to enhance research transfer to ACCHOs and other stakeholders.

The culmination of the project will be a Research Forum in Melbourne in September. Key representatives from the ACCHOs and all universities in Victoria will be invited. The Forum will result in a presentation of the information shared in workshops and discussions and assist in enhancing respectful collaborative relationships between VACCHO, ACCHOs and the broader University sector in Victoria to address the Social Determinants of Aboriginal Health.



Some of the participants at VACCHO's Melbourne Research Workshop, 5th August 2009.

Understanding young minds: new accredited training program from *beyondblue*



beyondblue and the Australian General Practice Network (AGPN) have developed an accredited-training package designed to help GPs, practice nurses and allied health professionals detect and treat mental health problems in young people aged 12 to 24.

The training was developed with by health professionals, psychologists, young people and GPs.

The *Young Minds: Treating Depression and Anxiety in Young People* training package is available online at www.ebmcbt.com

It includes:

- up-to-date clinical information and guidelines for diagnosis
- treatment and management of depression and anxiety in young people
- fact sheets and reference information
- video interviews
- advice on how to create a more 'youth friendly' practice.

Doctor Rajen Pillay, a General Practitioner in Victoria, undertook the *Young Minds* online training twice. He contacted *beyondblue* and the AGPN to congratulate them on the package and agreed to an interview about his experience.

Dr Pillay says the big challenge for GPs is to create an atmosphere where young people, parents and carers feel comfortable discussing mental health issues. Similarly, it is important health professionals are aware of the multitude of issues young people are confronted with in modern society.

"GPs realise the critical importance of addressing the mental and emotional needs of young people and working with families as a whole unit," he said. "We are also acutely aware of the need for early detection, treatment and management of mental health disorders and the value of collaborative care. The *Young Minds* package incorporates all of the above."

After spending six hours over three days doing the training at his own leisure, Dr Pillay said he felt more equipped to relate to young people and more confident in diagnosis and treatment plans for anxiety and depression.

"The training package is comprehensive and specifically designed to address the challenges many GPs have when consulting with young people," he said. "I found it informative, educational, innovative and even exciting. It demonstrates the common mental health issues affecting young people and uses appropriate interviewing techniques and psychological strategies to address them.

"I believe my overall communication and interviewing strategies with young people have evolved since studying this invaluable online training and I now have greater insight into their minds."

Other advantages of the training, he said, was the ability to learn at your own pace – which will suit busy health practitioners.

The Young Minds online training package has now been approved as Mental Health Skills Training (MHST) by the General Practice Mental Health Standards Collaboration. It is also endorsed by the Australian Association of Social Workers and the Royal College of Nurses.

A face-to-face version of Young Minds, also approved as MHST, will be rolled out through Divisions of General Practice around Australia from September this year.

You can access the free training online at www.ebmcbt.com

continued on page 8

Understanding young minds: new accredited training program from *beyondblue*

Continued from page 7

For more information about depression, anxiety and related disorders, visit the *beyondblue* website www.beyondblue.org.au or for young people www.youthbeyondblue.com Alternatively, phone the *beyondblue* information line on **1300 22 4636** (local call cost from a landline).

About the development of *Young Minds*:

The *Young Minds: Treating Depression and Anxiety in Young People* training was created by a team of experts in adolescent mental health based at Monash and Flinders University, including Professor Bruce Tonge and Associate Professor Malcolm Battersby.

An advisory group oversaw the development of the training, including General Practitioners and representatives from consumer and carer groups, the Centre for Adolescent Health in Melbourne, the Australian General Practice Network, Clockwork Youth Health Service, headspace, the Youth Coalition of the ACT, the Australian Practice Nurse Association, the Australian Psychological Society and Adelaide Northern Division of General Practice.

Depression in young people – the facts

Depression is most common in mid-to-late adolescence, with an estimated one in five adolescents experiencing a diagnosable depressive disorder by age 18. Around 6 per cent of 16 to 24-year-olds (one in 16) have depression and 15 per cent (one in six) have anxiety. Current Australian research suggests that people aged 15 to 24 are more anxious and depressed than ever before and worry about everything from body image and family breakdown to the prospect of war. The emergence of depression during childhood and adolescence has been shown to have negative effects on quality of life and physical health into adulthood and old age.

If depression or other mental disorders are recognised and treated early, this may increase the chances of a better long-term outcome, however, most young people with depression or a common anxiety disorder report delays of five to 15 years before they receive treatment and care. Early recognition and help-seeking can only happen if young people and their support network (e.g. family, friends) know about mental disorders, the type of help available, and where to access help.

References are available and can be obtained from beyond blue at: anne.edmonds@beyondblue.org.au

28-30 September 2009, Hotel Realm, Canberra, ACT

for more information visit our website at:
www.phaa.net.au



PHAA 39th Annual Conference
MAKING A DIFFERENCE
Intervening to improve health outcomes



Sponsors for the PHAA 39th Annual Conference

The Public Health Association of Australia Inc. wishes to thank NHMRC, Department of Health & Ageing, NSW Health and ACT Health.





Public Health Association
AUSTRALIA



Food Futures: An Australian Approach

Call For Abstracts

20 - 21 April 2010
HOTEL REALM, CANBERRA

Abstract submissions close 5 October 2009

For Conference updates visit the PHAA website: www.phaa.net.au

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

NEW SOUTH WALES

Dr Catherine Hawke
 Ms Katrina Jankowski
 Dr Barbara-Ann Adelstein
 Ms Susan Thomas
 Mr Larry Pierce
 Miss Serena Cramer-Roberts
 Ms Jude Page
 Ms Rebecca Lackenby
 Ms Lauren Shore
 Dr Tania Janusic
 Ms Bronwen Taylor
 Mr Aaron William Cashmore

VICTORIA

Ms Elaine Stevenson
 Ms Joey De Backer
 Dana Maree Young
 Ms Gavin Samantha
 Dr Rebecca Fanany
 Mr Asfaha Abraha
 Mr James Gaw
 Ms Catherine Kelly
 Ms Lucy Squires
 Helen Walsh
 Miss Chelsea Taylor

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Ms Phillippa Farrell
 Miss Annegret Harries
 Mrs Sharon Slater
 Mrs Jane Gardiner
 Miss Melanie Griffiths
 Ms Helen Mitchell

Miss Jessica Storey
 Miss Natalie Hobson
 Mrs Cathie Hynch
 Miss Avinna Trzesinski
 Mrs Louise
 Dr Min Zhang
 Ms Carole Parker
 Mr Abdullah Almeqren

QUEENSLAND

Ms Aleena Wojcieszek
 Ms Rita Fahy
 Mr Peter Malouf
 Miss Joanna Coutts
 Ms Lucy Marsh-Bibb
 Ms Cherie Cooper
 Miss Alice Walker

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Miss Sarah Brooker
 Mr Andrew Lerner
 Ms Dannielle Post
 Mrs Caroline Lloyd
 Dr Kinanga Andrew Magambo

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Ms Josephine Farrugia

OVERSEAS

Mr Md. Shofiqul Islam
 Ms Charlotte Ashton

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Ms Nicole Goulding
 Ms Kellie Schouten

Advertising Rates

1/4 page \$100
 1/2 page \$150
 Full page \$200

PDF format preferred but PHAA staff can prepare your advertisement (rate of \$20 p/h)

Conference listing (5cm column)

up to 5 lines \$35
 up to 10 lines \$58

after booking, send to PHAA, attention:

Vicki Thompson
20 Napier Close
Deakin ACT 2605

If further information is required please contact PHAA via email:

publications@phaa.net.au

or phone **02 6285 2373**

Acronyms that are regularly used in the PHAA Newsletter

- PHAA** - Public Health Association of Australia Inc.
- SIG** - Special Interest Group
- AIHW** - Australian Institute of Health & Welfare
- WHO** - World Health Organization
- ACT** - Australian Capital Territory
- NSW** - New South Wales
- VIC** - Victoria
- WA** - Western Australia
- TAS** - Tasmania
- SA** - South Australia
- NT** - Northern Territory
- QLD** - Queensland

Editors: Elizabeth Proude, Susan Stratigos, Jacky Hony & Pippa Burns

Articles appearing in *intouch* do not necessarily reflect the views of the PHAA but are intended to inform and stimulate thought, discussion and comment. Contributions are welcome and should be sent to:

The Editor, *intouch*, PHAA
 PO Box 319, Curtin ACT 2605, or email publications@phaa.net.au

How to join PHAA

Membership enquiries to:
 Membership Coordinator, PHAA
 PO Box 319, Curtin ACT 2605
 Tel 02 6285 2373 Fax 02 6282 5438
 email: membership@phaa.net.au
 website: www.phaa.net.au