



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

Welcome to the “new look” PHAA newsletter. So why the new look?

Firstly we have 2 new editors - Melissa Stoneham and Phillipa Farrell. Secondly, the electronic version of the newsletter was not being widely read. A hard copy newsletter is not so easy to delete or file away for reading at a later date!!

Although the format of the newsletter has changed, it will continue to be the primary vehicle for information dissemination between the WA Committee and our Members. Your input is always welcomed and encouraged and contributions can be forwarded to Melissa Stoneham at melissagiv@git.com.au.

Message from the President – Mike Daube

There has never been a more important time for public health practitioners to work together in the interests of public health. There is ever more evidence on both the immensity of the challenges we face, globally, nationally and locally, and ever more evidence on the benefits a public health approach can bring. There is enormous community interest in areas we regard as the heart of public health: from disease control to environmental health, from epidemiology to health promotion, from the scar of indigenous disadvantage to the results of public health research, from community health to advocacy. Yet despite all the achievements of public health, despite all the manifest rewards to be reaped by a society that nurtures and supports public health, it is and perhaps always will remain a Cinderella discipline. It is vital therefore that public health practitioners work closely together to promote both public health objectives and their own professional interests.

The Public Health Association exists to serve and support its members, and through them the community. We seek to ensure that our members are informed (through the Journal, In Touch, and other communications), supported (through professional development), kept in contact with each other (through conferences, seminars and Branch activities) and represented (through advocacy).

The WA Branch Committee is keen to develop its activities in each of these areas. We are developing an ambitious program, which we hope will meet the needs of our members and attract new interest in public health and PHAA. The more members we have, the better we are placed to develop good activities and to represent public health interests. For this reason, I would urge PHAA members to encourage others to join. We are keen to attract new members at all levels, and recognising the importance of helping people at the start of their public health careers we have significantly reduced the cost of student membership.

Our seminars this year have so far been successful, with standing room only for the sessions on "How to Lobby Me" and Avian Flu. We have also been active in advocacy, both locally and nationally. But we want to hear from our members on three key areas:

- What can we do for you? What would you like PHAA in WA to do that will assist and support you in your work?

- What can we do for public health and the community? What are the areas in which you would like to see us advocating, whether locally or nationally, for broad health gain or to support public health practitioners?
- What can you do for PHAA? Are you willing to play a more active role, whether as a committee member, in a Special Interest Group, or in some other way?

Over the years WA has led the nation in many aspects of public health. We aim to ensure that this record is maintained, and that the WA Branch also leads PHAA through membership and range of activity. Please let us know your views in response to any or all of the questions above. That will make us much more effective in helping you, as public health practitioners, but also in ensuring that we press for public health objectives that are worthwhile and achievable.

I look forward to hearing from you, or to seeing you at one of our events.

Professor Mike Daube – President

Professional Development Review

The PHA (WA Branch) has a commitment to providing a diverse range of professional development options for the public health workforce. Committee Members such as Terri Pikora, Krista Coward, Peter Howat and Mike Duabe have been instrumental in ensuring the smooth running of these important events. If you would like to suggest a theme for a Professional Development seminar, or assist our seminar organisers, please contact Terri Pikora (tpikora@meddent.uwa.edu.au). We have included a review of the one of the most recent professional development seminars, the “How to Lobby Me” Forum. This event was held at the Technology Park Function Centre on March 22nd. The event was well attended with over 100 attending. Here is an extract from the event kindly provided by the Hon. Dr Judy Edwards MLA, who spoke on how to lobby Ministers:

Lobbying Government Ministers

Lobbying government ministers is challenging but a critical activity for achieving strong public health outcomes. Keep in mind that politics is essentially about interactions between people so get to know the relevant ministers and the key advisors in their offices. Remember also that public health change is often a long haul so establish links with opposition parties and backbenchers who have an interest in your areas of concern. This can be very beneficial in the long term.

In your lobbying try and connect to the person. Find the common ground remembering that virtually all people in politics are driven by a belief in some sort of better world. Learn the background and interests of the MP. For example, is there a particular way in which this issue resonates in their electorate?

With Government Ministers it is important to remember that they are incredibly busy. Do you need to meet with the Minister now – would the Minister’s chief of staff or senior policy advisor be just as good in the first instance? Get to know them and the Minister’s media advisor. Early notification of ministerial news releases and events can help you in your responses. Where relevant, let them know what you are doing. Mostly Ministers prefer to know a stunt/ protest/ whatever will be taking place at event X, rather than being totally surprised or ambushed! With all activities adopt a professional approach, you and your issues will earn more respect.

Go to the meeting with an agenda and some outcomes in mind. Ministers want to know what the problem is, how it can be solved and what steps can be taken immediately to start resolution. They are focussed and keen on outcomes. Follow up with a letter or ask for a meeting down the

track. Be open-minded. Sometimes you'll find an MP who unexpectedly shares your passion, or a party who has a different (and acceptable) agenda or reason for achieving the same outcome.

Try and tailor the message to the person. Find out what styles of communication they prefer. Take written material, charts, photos, but not too much. Leaving CD's, DVD's probably isn't very productive.

Gather some intelligence for your visit. Talk to key people, in the ministerial office, the relevant department, other interest groups. Keep in mind how this issues is playing out in the media including local papers, marginal seats, parliament and other forums. Use humour where you can!

While Ministers and MPs are important don't forget government officials. They provide advice and feedback to Ministers and a good word from them can be invaluable in reinforcing the legitimacy of your issues.

Above all remember we are all human and want change we believe is for the better. Harness these shared values and don't be afraid to aspire to great outcomes!

WA Advocacy Priorities

The WA Branch is currently developing advocacy policies, together with a list of advocacy priorities to be addressed over the next 12 months. The process for identifying issues to date has included input from all Board Members and an invitation to 11 public health leaders asking them for thoughts on which issues they would like to see the federal and State Governments fund into the future. Many issues have been raised and include:

Land use planning and impact on public health	Initiatives to encourage social supports (w.v.t mental health promotion)
Health Act lobbying-use of HIAs	Smoking cessation during pregnancy
HIV / AIDS	Indigenous environmental health
Health disparities	Alcohol issues
Childhood and adolescent obesity (Environmental factors, physical activity and nutrition, breastfeeding, softdrink)	War on poverty
Ageing population	Early childhood development
Workforce issues	Decreasing social inequalities
Preventing mental illness	Improving the health of children with disabilities and their families
Gambling	Maternal drug and alcohol issues
Genetics	Increasing public health spending in WA and nationally, public health as a priority
Improved access to healthy food in rural and remote areas	Coherent nutrition policies
Metabolic syndrome	Tobacco legislation
Supporting public health research	Folate fortification
Aboriginal health – practical solutions to problems	Pilot parenting centres
Smoking cessation for Aboriginal communities	Injury and safety: in the WA Health System
Early intervention	Care for kids, respect for needs and communication

This is a long list of interesting issues. Priorities will be selected based on a range of criteria. However, Member input is invited to assist with this process. The WA Branch invites Members to select the top three advocacy issues from the list above or any others you would like to suggest,

that you feel should be the focus of the PHAA (WA Branch) attentions over the next 12 months. Suggestions can be forwarded to Melissa Stoneham at melissagiv@git.com.au.

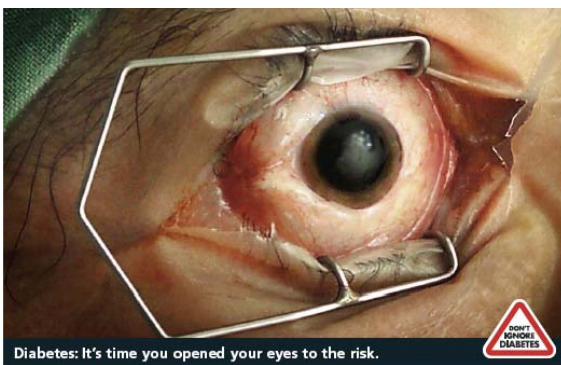
SHOCK ADS ACT AS DIABETES WAKE UP CALL

Diabetes Australia WA is set to continue with its hard-hitting advertising campaign aimed at slashing the escalating rate of Type 2 diabetes. The campaign which first ran in TV and print media last July is now entering phase 2 with radio advertisements hitting Perth's airwaves in July to coincide with National Diabetes Week. The campaign focuses on the potential complications of diabetes to raise awareness and personal concern about the disease. Diabetes Australia Western Australia (DAWA) CEO, Liz Kerrigan, said the 'Don't Ignore Diabetes' campaign was an important step toward halting the diabetes epidemic gripping the nation.

"Our research tells us that less than half the people at risk of diabetes even think it is a serious disease. Confronting ads like these are a much-needed wake up call for those at risk and are a vital component of Diabetes Australia WA's prevention programs" she said. After the first phase of the campaign the number of West Australians for whom diabetes was first to mind when asked about serious diseases more than doubled.

The campaign was developed and piloted in WA with funding from Healthway in 2003. Formative research and campaign evaluation was conducted by Curtin University's Centre for Behavioural Research in Cancer Control. Full reports are available at www.dontignorediabetes.com.au. The campaign was implemented nationally for the first time in 2005 as part of Diabetes Australia's National Diabetes Action Program. Diabetes Australia WA receives funding support from Healthway to extend the campaign's impact in WA.

Help spread the Don't Ignore Diabetes message in your local community. Visit www.dontignorediabetes.com.au to order free resources. For more information on activities occurring in WA that support the campaign during National Diabetes Week visit the DAWA website at www.dawa.asn.au and follow the National Diabetes Week links. National Diabetes Week 2006 runs from the 9th to the 15th of July.



Do you have a campaign or program you would like people in public health to know about? Contact the editors so we can put it in the next newsletter.

Great news....Student Fees have been smashed!!

Students can now join the PHAA for a reduced rate of \$45.00per annum. The WA Branch is also going to subsidise the first 50 students to the amount of \$10, making your annual fee **\$35.00**. So why join? Benefits of joining the PHA include:

- Join as many special interest groups for free for the first year
- Access to the journal online
- Access to bulletin boards
- Access to professional development opportunities
- Access to networking opportunities
- Reduced conference registration fees
- Access to scholarships and awards

For more information contact Terri Pikora at tpikora@meddent.uwa.edu.au.

PHA in the media...a list of our contributions

The WA Branch has been active in the media in the past 3 months. Here are just some of the topics that have been addressed on behalf of Members:

- Alcohol and the new licensing laws
- Aboriginal environmental health
- Folate in foods
- Screening of migrant workers
- Breast milk bank
- Gambling

The recent Federal Budget included much that was important in relation to health. If anyone wants the full ACOSS analysis, they should contact Mike Daube at M.Daube@curtin.edu.au

Upcoming professional development opportunities and conferences

PHAA and AHPA Present Health Promotion Competencies - Your Turn To Join The Discussion

This workshop will include:

- Results of the national survey conducted in 2005
- Comparison of the 2001 and 2005 health promotion competencies
- Discussion on the implications & practical uses of the competencies
- Identifying 'core' competencies for health promotion practice
- Opportunity to discuss other issues related to health promotion competencies

When: Wednesday 26th July, 4pm – 6pm

Where: Curtin Health Research Centre, 10 Selby Street, Shenton Park

RSVP – 9382 5921

The PHAA (WA) Seminar in August will be on the topic of gambling – stay tuned for details.

21 June 2006, Canberra ACT

AUSTRALIA'S HEALTH 2006 CONFERENCE

Convenor: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Ph: 02 6244 1032

Fax: 02 6244 1045

Email: conference2006@aihw.gov.au

Web: www.aihw.gov.au

5-7 July 2006, Perth WA

2006 GENERAL PRACTICE & PRIMARY HEALTH CARE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Optimising impact

Convenor: Primary Health Care Research & Information Service

Contact: Conference Logistics

Ph: 02 6281 6624

Email: conference@conlog.com.au

Web: www.phcris.org.au/conference/2006/index.php

5-7 July 2006, Palmerston North, NEW ZEALAND
PHA NEW ZEALAND CONFERENCE 2006
Sustaining Public Health
Web: www.pha.org.nz

30 Jul-1 August 2006, Sydney NSW
**20th NATIONAL IMMUNISATION / 2nd PHAA
ASIA PACIFIC VACCINE PREVENTABLE
DISEASES CONFERENCE**
Successes in Immunisation
Ph: 02 6285 2373
Email: conference@phaa.net.au
Web: www.phaa.net.au

4-7 September 2006, Darwin NT
**AUSTRALASIAN EVALUATION SOCIETY
2006 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**
Evaluation in Emerging Areas
Contact: Desliens Conference & Event Management
Ph: 08 8941 038
Email: dcem@desliens.com.au
Web: www.aes.asn.au

25-27 September 2006, Sydney NSW
**37th PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF
AUSTRALIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE**
*Tackling the Determinants of Health: From the
bush to Bondi*
Ph: 02 6285 2373
Email: conference@phaa.net.au
Web: www.phaa.net.au

29 Oct-1 November 2006, Fremantle WA
**THE MEN'S ADVISORY NETWORK INC
INAUGURAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE
2006**
From babies to blokes - the making of men
Contact: Promaco Conventions Pty Ltd
Ph: 08 9332 2900
Email: promaco@promaco.com.au
Web: www.promaco.com.au/conference/2006/man

Did you miss the Advocacy Workshop the PHAA recently ran?
Would you like a copy of the Advocacy Workshop CD?

Limited copies are available for sale from Peter Howat at P.Howat@curtin.edu.au

Member \$4.00 Non- Members \$10.00

The School of Public Health at Curtin will be launching their FIRST Postgraduate Winter School Program in July 2006. There will be five units available for study either as an enrolled student [full 5 day course] or for professional development purposes [4 days]. The topics, dates and convenors are listed below:

July 3-7	Sexology 65	Gareth Merriman
July 10--14	Biosecurity	Prof. Aileen Plant
July 17-21	Nutrition in Developing Countries	Prof. Colin Binns
July 17-21	Sexology 651	Gareth Merriman
July 17-21	Forensic Sexology 650	Gareth Merriman

For further information and application forms contact the School of Public Health on 08-9266-7819.

WANT TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION?

Do you have a contribution for the PHAA (WA) newsletter? Please forward to Melissa Stoneham at melissagiv@git.com.au

