

Welcome to the New Zealand Rural General Practice Network e-zine for 22 October 2010.

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Balinting by telephone

The New Zealand Institute of Rural Health is establishing a Balint telephone group. There are still several places available and the Institute would be pleased to hear from practitioners who might be interested in joining the group. The proposal is to meet regularly by telephone in the evenings.

In the first instance contact either: Robin Steed, NZIRH CEO, email robin@nzirh.org.nz or telephone 07 823 9274, or George Tripe, medical advisor, email george@nzirh.org.nz or telephone 021 247 7454.

Peter Snow Memorial Awards 2011

Nominations are now open for the annual Peter Snow Memorial Awards to be announced at the Network's 2011 conference in Wellington, March 17-20.

The awards were set up to honour the life and work of Dr Peter Snow who passed away in March 2006. Dr Snow was a rural general practitioner based in Tapanui.

For more information, nomination guidelines or to nominate someone please click [here](#).

Network Conference 2011

The theme of next year's conference is "Family Matters: Supporting rural general practice, rural communities, practitioners and their families". This showcase rural health event will be held from March 17-20 at the Wellington Convention Centre (Michael Fowler Centre).

The New Zealand Rural General Practice Network was formed in the early 1990s by a group of GPs who were passionate about providing quality healthcare to rural communities and supporting rural GPs and their families. The 2011 Conference revisits these core values.

For information on the programme, registration, exhibition stands, sponsorship and social events click [here](#).

MoH funding round

The Ministry of Health is commencing another round of the Rural Innovation Fund. The funding round is now open and runs until Friday, November 26, 2010.

Hokonui, Takitimu, Invercargill-Te Ara a Kewa, Wakatipu, Rural Otago, Taieri and Strath Taieri, Otago Southern Region and Well Dunedin PHOs' legal "deed of assignment" is effective now and Mornington PHO will join the amalgamation July 1, 2011.

Please go to the following Ministry website link for further information: Click [here](#).

Drs aides raise worries over care

An influential medical group has expressed concerns about patients' safety in a trial of employing "physician assistants" to do some of the work of doctors. (NZ Herald)

Physician assistants are common in the United States, but not in New Zealand.

[Read more](#)

Health chair paints grim picture

The health service demand, supply and funding mismatch is far worse than most people imagine and unless clinicians step up to drive and "own" new models of care, they are unlikely to happen. (Hutt News)

That's the message the executive chairman of Health Workforce New Zealand, Des Gorman, delivered at the annual Nordmeyer Lecture at Otago University's Wellington School of Medicine recently.

[Read more](#)

Medical help website launched

A new website has been launched to help people who don't understand what their doctor is talking about. (RNZ)

Susan Reid from the New Zealand Centre for Workforce Literacy Development says more than half of all adults find it hard to obtain and understand the health information they need to make appropriate health decisions.

She says it's even worse for Maori with 80% of men and 75% of women struggling with medical jargon.

Waatea News reports that the new website www.healthliteracy.org.nz tries to put things in words people use normally.

Ms Reid says the website also gives people simple questions they can ask their doctor.

Nursing team wins IT competition

A colorectal cancer care nursing service has won the first stage of the IT Clinical Challenge, winning technology prizes and travel to IT conferences. (NZDoctor)

The competition is organised by the Health IT Board, HINZ and the Health IT cluster in a move to get clinicians involved in thinking about IT solutions.

[Read more](#)

Young Farmers get plastered for breast cancer

Wellington Young Farmers are boldly fronting up to breast cancer by supporting an innovative campaign from Rural Women New Zealand to highlight the need for women of all ages to be alert to any changes in their breasts.

Cheekily dubbed "Let's Get Plastered for Breast Cancer" the nationwide event involves women (and some men) creating plaster sculptures of their breasts, which are going on display in galleries and cafes all over the country for Breast Cancer Awareness month in October.

Rural Women New Zealand will donate profits from the sale of the plaster kits to the NZ Breast Cancer Foundation.

For access to the latest Rural Bulletin from Rural Women New Zealand click [here](#).

Only five GPs elected to DHBs

Just five GPs and not a single practice nurse gained DHB membership nationwide after votes were tallied from the recent local body elections. (NZ Doctor)

Bay of Plenty, Nelson Marlborough, MidCentral, Taranaki and Southern DHBs are the only boards which gained or retained GP membership after elections closed on October 9.

[Read more](#)

Health Board returns women

Every woman who stood for the MidCentral District Health Board was elected, a result that has delighted Minister of Women's Affairs Pansy Wong. (Manawatu Standard)

"I have been passionate about encouraging women to believe in themselves and do the work and offer themselves for competition and promotion into leadership."

[Read more](#)

Not a member? Join the Network!

The Network is the only nationwide membership-based organisation in New Zealand representing the interests of rural general practice.

Visit our [website](#) for additional information and an online application form or contact Rob Olsen on 04 495 5887.

Network on Twitter

You can follow the Network and associated rural health sector news, views and events on Twitter or sign up and give us your news and views - just click on the Twitter icon below or visit our website www.rgpn.org.nz



Need a break? Looking for a locum?

Don't forget to submit your application for locum cover to the NZLocums team. The team are currently busy working with doctors who are due to arrive in New Zealand from November onwards.

If you're hoping for a break before the Christmas rush or looking forward to taking a well earned rest in the summer, contact us now by completing an application [FORM](#) and send it through to the recruitment team (usual terms and conditions for applications apply).

Tougher stance on GP patient eligibility proposed

General practices will be required to see patients' passports to check they qualify for funded healthcare if a recommendation to that effect is signed off at PSAAP. (NZ Doctor)

A PSAAP working group tasked with revising PHO enrolment requirements has produced a draft document being circulated ahead of the next full PSAAP meeting scheduled for 10 November.

[Read more](#)

Care of aged in 'crisis'

Carers told not to speak to residents to save time and residents left in bed all day because of lack of staff are among issues which suggest the aged-care sector is in crisis and urgently needs regulation, a report released recently says. (ODT)

The sector's issues are "chronic and widespread" and required urgent attention, according to the report, which is based on a review by Green Party MP Sue Kedgley and outgoing Labour MP Winnie Laban.

[Read more](#)

GP slams hospital staff levels

Wairau Hospital's reliance on inexperienced house surgeons after hours is risking patients' lives and doctors' careers, says a medical school senior lecturer. (Marlborough Express)

Otago University's Buzz Burrell says the loss of after-hours staffing by GPs at the Blenheim hospital emergency ward and a lack of senior staff after hours is a step backwards for safety.

[Read more](#)

Southland weather 'bad for the heart'

Southland weather is no good for your heart, according to the Heart Foundation. (Southland Times)

Heart Foundation national cardiac care manager Stewart Eadie said Southland was the fifth-worst region out of 21 for death rates related to cardiovascular disease, and one of the main causes was expected to be the lack of exercise.

[Read more](#)

Q'town will have a voice

Queenstown will not lose its voice on the Southern District Health Board despite no resident sitting on the board because it had not had a specific representative since 2004, says Wakatipu Health Trust chairwoman Maria Cole. (Southland Times)

Two-term board member and Queenstown resident Fiona McArthur was not re-elected to the board at the recent local body elections.

[Read more](#)

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