

HEALTH CONSUMER NETWORK

NETWORK NEWS BRIEF - June 2010

WELCOME

Welcome to another Network News Brief. This publication is sent out via email approximately 3 or 4 times a year (and in hard copy to those members who request it this way). Each year we plan to host two Health Consumers Forums, providing consumers and consumer organisations with the opportunity to find out more about Consumer focussed health issues. At the Forums, we also seek your views and advice on a range of health topics.

NEWS FROM THE DIVISION

FEEDBACK: from our last Consumer Health Forum (in April 2010)

The focus of the April Forum asked “How can we better facilitate a greater uptake of exercise in the community? What are the barriers and possible solutions?” These questions arose from the Tasmania Together 2020 targets for healthier communities measuring the percentage of the population who do not do enough exercise to avoid chronic disease. There is a high correlation between higher activity levels and improved wellbeing. For the full report, [click here](#).

Some of the barriers included:

- Wood fires – excessive smoke in the environment
- Safety, eg, street lighting not adequate for night walking; footpaths in need of repair
- Access - Transport, types of diseases, level, physical, different surfaces – environment, motivation & lack of excitement, bad-cold weather or too hot, financial, isolation (a need for sharing the experience with someone)
- Elitism of sports

Some potential solutions included:

- Changing community thinking and mindset through effective promotion
- Health Fund incentives
- More coaches in schools
- Mentoring
- Councils promote more free exercise opportunities & more parks, paths & children’s playgrounds
- Sustainable transport incl. more facilities eg bike tracks
- Media promotion aimed at teenagers (especially girls) emphasising an association between “being good-looking” and how to achieve it through physical activity.

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED:

The Tasmanian School of Medicine is seeking part-time / casual Clinical Teaching Associates (CTAs) to participate in training medical students in the area of sensitive men’s examinations.

CTAs are people who train future doctors by acting as “professional patients” who allow themselves to undergo genital and other physical examinations. In addition, they provide feedback to the students on appropriate technique and etiquette. A successful women’s CTA program has been running in Tasmania for over a decade, as well as in many other parts of Australia, teaching gynaecological and other sensitive examinations. For more information, [click here](#).



NEWS FROM OTHER AREAS

***BUDGET:* Major pieces of Health Reform jigsaw promised**

Following the May Federal Budget, consumers now have a clearer idea of how health reform will work in the coming months and years.

The Federal Budget details show that health will receive a boost of \$7.3 billion over five years to fund major new health reform initiatives. Key initiatives promised funding include:

- \$416.8m over five years for Medicare Locals (new primary health care organisations) and for better after-hours access;
- \$355.2m for new GP Superclinics;
- \$390.3m for practice nurses to assist GPs;
- \$449.2m over five years for diabetes programs;
- E-health - \$466.7m over 2 years to implement the NEHTA business case and introduce personal electronic health records by 1 July 2012;
- Hospitals – activity based funding \$163m; four hour emergency access targets \$500m;
- Workforce - \$643m for training of health professions;
- Prevention - \$131.8m for new initiatives including anti-smoking and binge drinking campaigns.

***TROUBLE SLEEPING?* Try these tips for a good night's sleep**

- ☆ Try to sleep and wake up at the same time each day
- ☆ Be as active as possible during the day and spend some time outdoors
- ☆ Reduce the amount of caffeine you have each day and avoid caffeinated drinks after lunch time
- ☆ Avoid naps during the day. If you do nap, keep it to 20 minutes and before 3pm
- ☆ Avoid heavy meals, exercise or working on the computer late in the evening
- ☆ Make sure your bedroom is not too hot or cold
- ☆ Relax for 30 minutes before going to bed (e.g. have a warm bath)
- ☆ Avoid smoking and drinking alcohol in the evening
- ☆ Don't eat, work, watch television, read or discuss problems in bed
- ☆ Ensure you are comfortable and your bedroom is quiet and dark
- ☆ Don't stay in bed if you are awake for more than 20 minutes – go to another room and do something relaxing

Good sleep habits may take some time to develop. Don't give up!

These tips are courtesy of the National Prescribing Service and are available to order as a card-reminder. Visit www.nps.org.au to order and for more practical advice on sleep.

OVER TO YOU...

Don't forget that General Practice South is keen to receive comments or questions relating to general practice from members of the Health Consumer Network at any time (you don't have to wait for us to ask specific questions). Suggestions for topics of future Forums are also welcomed.

If you have any news from your organisation that is likely to be of interest to GPs or their staff, the deadline for the August 2010 edition of the *Division News* is July 9, 2010.

We look forward to hearing from you. If you need to discuss any issues in this newsletter, please contact Julie Dunbabin – Program Manager – at the Division, ph: 6208 7300 or email jdunbabin@gpsouth.com.au

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