

Media Release

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A first class line-up to spring into Alice in April

Alice Springs is set to welcome a first class line-up of Keynote speakers and delegates at the 'Caring for Country Kids' conference, 17-19 April 2016 and if you register before 31 January 2016 you can take advantage of the discounted registration fee.

The opening session will hear Megan Mitchell, National Children's Commissioner, talk about a human rights approach to the health and wellbeing of rural kids in Australia. Ms Mitchell will be followed by 2015 NT Young Australian of the Year, Chantal Ober.

There will be a special plenary session on 'Improving the health and wellbeing of Indigenous children'. Speakers will include June Oscar and Emily Carter from Marninwarntikura Fitzroy Women's Resource Centre who will talk about freeing Fitzroy Crossing from the scourge of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Others in this special session will be Kerry Arabena from the Onemda VicHealth Koori Health Unit; Kelvin Kong, paediatric ENT surgeon from the Hunter Valley; and Pat Anderson, Chair of The Lowitja Institute and one of the authors of the *Children are Sacred* report.

Other keynote speakers include Frank Oberklaid from the Centre for Community Child Health; Julie James Bailey, educator and film maker, who will talk about the use and misuse of standard Australian English in remote communities; and Ewen McPhee, President of the Rural Doctors' Association of Australia.

"In addition to these keynote addresses there will be around 85 speakers presenting in 20 concurrent and poster sessions on topics such as closing the eHealth gap; rheumatic heart disease; disability; parenting in rural and remote areas; child and adolescent mental health; improving care for vulnerable children; children's oral health; children's nutrition; and young children and alcohol," said Gordon Gregory, CEO of the National Rural Health Alliance.

"If you are interested in the wellbeing of country kids in Australia this is an opportunity to contribute to a set of recommendations that aims to improve their future health and wellbeing," he said.

The Conference is a joint venture of Children's Healthcare Australasia (CHA) and the National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA). It is being held in the Alice Springs Convention Centre from 17-19 April 2016.

For more details email conference@ruralhealth.org.au and register at www.countrykids.org.au

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