Northern Territory Medical Program Update

Staff of Flinders University based in Darwin and Adelaide and Charles Darwin University staff have been working hard to bring together the many facets of the NT Medical Program (NTMP) to ensure that we are ready for our first NT cohort in February 2011. The Australian Medical Council visited in June and we are awaiting their accreditation report.

Admissions

Interviews have been completed for the Indigenous Entry Stream pathway to the new Northern Territory Medical Program. The interviews were held in the week of 9 August with two panels comprising NTMP staff, AIDA representatives and Indigenous community representatives. A large number of Indigenous candidates were interviewed, and if the number interviewed translates into admitted students this will represent the largest single year cohort of Indigenous medical students ever in Australia’s history.

Applicants that have been successful in completing the Indigenous Entry Stream interviews have been invited to attend a Preparation for Medicine Program that will be held in Darwin from 15 November to the 10 December 2010.

From 2011 onwards, as part of a new initiative developed by Flinders University, Indigenous applicants can apply through a separate entry pathway to the Graduate Entry Medical Program that will not require completion of the GAMSAT. The new pathway involves students completing an application, interview and a bridging program.

There has been a significant amount of interest from NT residents in the General GEMP pathway to the BMBS and candidates have now been selected for interviews which will take place in Darwin on September 21st and 22nd. Panels will assess the prospective students in a range of areas and successful candidates will receive notification of a place between October and January 2011. Commencement date for all students in Year 1 will be Monday 21st February 2011.

(Continued on following page.......)

Photos Above: NTMP Staff members Mary Waria (left) and Bilawara Lee (right background) at the Flinders booth at the NAIDOC family day, Jingili Water Gardens.
For 2012 entry GAMSAT registration will be open from mid October 2010 until the end of January 2011. For more information on medicine with the NT Medical Program and at Flinders University go to www.flinders.edu.au/gemp

An overarching MOU between Flinders and Charles Darwin Universities is nearing completion and will be signed in the near future. Additional schedules which will cover student and staff access, services, ICT and buildings are being worked up to be ready prior to our first students commencing.

### Student Support

Work is continuing to provide a complete range of student support to the students of the NT Medical Program. This support will be provided by staff of the NTMP, Charles Darwin University and external bodies where necessary.

Flinders Medical Student Society members are working on establishing a branch in Darwin which will have interaction with their counterparts based at Bedford Park.

The Indigenous Transitions Pathways team are planning the support that they will be providing to students and are keen to see that this support extends to all NTMP students. Students will be provided with a comprehensive listing of services and how to access them on commencement of the course.

### Agreements

Flinders University has recently signed the funding agreement for the NT Medical Program with the Northern Territory Government. This agreement supersedes the previous agreement that was held for the NT Clinical School. We are looking forward to moving ahead and working with the NT Government under this new agreement.

### NT Medical Program visits Garma

Staff and students representing the NT Medical Program operated a booth at the recent Garma festival, held just out of Nhulunbuy on the Gove Peninsula. Trish Bate, Anna Smedts, and Mary Waria (NTCS Darwin); Louise Harker and Stephanie Tovey (Yr 3 CBME students); and Michelle Hockings (NTRCS Nhulunbuy) promoted the new Medical Program to Garma participants and enjoyed the cultural and educational activities.

Trish, Anna and Mary camped with provisions of communal meals, cultural activities and dust!!

Garma attractions included four forum tents, bunggul (traditional dance) in the afternoon, evening concerts at the main stage and indigenous movies. Evening guest speakers included Ernie Dingo and Jack Thompson.

The theme of this year’s Garma was “Looking to the Future”. Forum topics covered education, landcare and housing. Some of the individual presentations included “Insights into Indigenous Education and Training”, “Hopes, Dreams & How I Learn”, and “The Right to Education: Human Rights Case in Wadeye”.

Interest at our stall was constant on Saturday with a variety of questions. Many visitors were impressed that the medical program was beginning next year in Darwin and felt it was a fantastic opportunity for the Northern Territory.

### Photos at Right: Three recent photos of the NTMP building site

A – string art. B – weaving C – beads D – Shady Beach, Yirrakala E, F, G – Bunggul time H – NTCS stall (Mary, Louise Harker & Stephanie Tovey) I – Christina & Mica at weaving class and J – Mary enjoying Bunggul time

### NT Medical Program Update cont...

Mary Pocock

Photos on following page compiled by Anna Smedts:

A – string art. B – weaving C – beads D – Shady Beach, Yirrakala E, F, G – Bunggul time H – NTCS stall (Mary, Louise Harker & Stephanie Tovey) I – Christina & Mica at weaving class and J – Mary enjoying Bunggul time
NT Medical Program visits Garma

Photos Anna Smedts
NTMP Building Update

The thirteen million dollar Northern Territory Medical Program facility currently under construction at Charles Darwin University is progressing well. The site has recently been visited by the Federal Minister for Health and Ageing, Nicola Roxon, and more recently by Flinders University Chancellor and Vice Chancellor.

The building is due for completion in early January 2011, and will provide state of the art facilities for Years 1 & 2 of the NTMP.

Above from left to right: Flinders University Vice Chancellor Professor Michael Barber, Clinical Dean Professor Michael Lowe, Flinders University Chancellor Mr Stephen Gerlach and the project foreman Tim Adams from John Hollands Construction visit the NTMP building site.

Global Corporate Challenge

Seven NTCS staff – the Tiwi Trekkers - have been participating in the 16 week Global Corporate Challenge (GCC). With the challenge almost complete, we have so far trekked, flown and sailed across 76 different locations. We have visited a number of countries and had the opportunity to learn a little about each location on the way.

All seven participants have been wearing our individual pedometers on a daily basis and becoming more aware of our activity levels and hopefully we have all increased our fitness levels over the challenge.

The majority of the team members had a daily average of over 7,500 steps. Well done Tiwi Trekkers and keep up the good work.

The 2010 GCC came to an end on the 7th September and I invite you to participate by making a donation to the GCC Footprint Initiative (see information below). You can make your donation directly by credit card via the internet https://www.gettheworldmoving.com/howthegccworks/footprintinitiative.aspx

Your donation may be small but together we can make a difference.

Sister Elizabeth and her team of volunteers.

Thanks to the generous donations of GCC participants and supporters, The Iganga Babies Home have been able to purchase a much-needed van for the orphanage, funded repairs to the home so that the children are not exposed to the weather, provided clothing and daily essentials such as nappies and blankets.

The footprints initiative have also provided clean drinking water for 1,500 indigenous Honduran Indians and funded the vaccination against measles for 3,000 children in Papua New Guinea.

The Footprint Initiative®
The Iganga Babies Home is a last hope refuge for orphaned and abandoned children in the small eastern Ugandan town of Iganga. Thirty-two little ones are currently in the loving care of a local nun -

The Tiwi Trekkers Efforts
* Average daily distance per team member = 5km
* Total team steps to date >6 million
* Total distance travelled by team to date >4,000,000km
* Tiwi Trekkers Carbon offset  152kg
* Current location Polar Bear Plains, Greenland
Green Audit

As part of our efforts to improve our environmental performance, the NT Clinical School conducts an annual audit of our paper use, air travel and waste. Both paper usage in Darwin and flights have reduced in the last year, hence reducing our ecological footprint (refer to graphs at right).

Paper use has been reduced by defaulting all computers to double sided printing, reusing once-used paper for scrap, using laptops to display meeting agendas and minutes and encouraging staff to think before printing.

We have managed to reduce our air travel kilometers by improving videoconference facilities for meetings, seminars and teaching and encouraging staff to travel only when essential.

Hand Dryers for New Building

The staff bathrooms at the new CDU NTMP building will be equipped with Dyson hand dryers. The Dyson is apparently the fastest hand dryer and is hygienic too, purifying the air before blowing it onto hands. As it uses up to 80% less energy than warm air hand dryers, it costs less to run and will assist in lowering our carbon footprint.

National Ride to Work Day

13 October 2010

13 October is national ride to work day, so join us for breakfast after your ride at the Walker Room, NTCS Darwin from 7.30-8.30.

This will be the fifth and final ride to work event for 2010. We had a record number of students attend our August breakfast and hope to host many more participants on 13 October.
Darwin Lions Beer Can Regatta

The 37th Beer Can Regatta was held on Sunday 8th August. This was my 20th Beer Can Regatta, the first was in 1981 as a competitor, and then every year since 1991 as one of the volunteer workers.

The 2010 Beer Can Regatta had 27 boats (not all made of beer cans). About 16,000 people came down to the beach making it one of the biggest regattas in recent years. Three of the boats were from international teams - two from Japan and one from the USS Mercy.

One of Japanese teams was made up of a Japanese girl band called AKB48 and their support team called “Team Ogi”. The band members arrived in Darwin on the Wednesday, and were shocked when informed by their producers that they were to build a beer can boat, compete in the regatta and appear in a reality TV show. Watch out for the DVD! They recruited me to be their beer can boat building expert, and maybe that was why their boat fell apart (boat pictured above). The USS Mercy was part of a multinational “Pacific Partnership” involving five different nations, contributing to health orientated humanitarian missions throughout the Pacific and south-east Asia.

The USS Mercy boat was the “No Mercy” and they won the Best Soft Drink boat class. Apparently the Captain of the USS Mercy didn’t know about “No Mercy” until they were two days out of Darwin, and Darwin to Katherine, you just followed the trail of empty beer cans.

NT News writer Paul Rice Chapman had a deal with Swan Breweries to hold some sort of Water Festival. Lutz Frankenfeld (a local businessman) was part of KAB – Keep Australia Beautiful – and was a friend of Paul’s. Paul came up with the idea of building rafts out of beer cans, and then got together with Lutz, who came up with the idea to put an outboard motor on the back. The first beer can boat was floated in Darwin Harbour in late 1973, and the first Beer Can Regatta was held on the 16th June 1974.

Beer Can Regatta origins

- 22,000 people attended the first regatta in 1974 at Vesty’s Beach, with 63 boats completing.
- The Beer Can Regatta has run every year since 1974, including in 1975, after Cyclone Tracy.
- The world speed record in a beer can boat is 58 knots (in those days, beer cans were made of steel – aluminum cans crush at about 28 knots).
- In 1978 the combined Lions Clubs of Darwin took over the running of the event, and it has been a major fund raiser for local deserving causes ever since.

Recent beneficiaries of the Beer Can Regatta include:

- 2005 & 2006 - St John Ambulance (a new ambulance for their Batchelor Volunteer Brigade)
- 2007 - Palliative Care (various items not supplied by DHF)
- 2008 - Variety NT (Special Childrens Camp at Goanna Park)
- 2009 - Anglicare (a new car for their HACC program)
- 2010 - Somerville Community services (a new car for their HACC program)
White Ribbon Day

In 1999, the United Nations General Assembly declared November 25 the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (IDEVAW) and the White Ribbon has become the symbol for the day. The Zonta Club of Darwin has organised Darwin’s annual White Ribbon Day Breakfast since 2005, and NT Medical Program staff Bilawara Lee and Mary Pocock are at the forefront of the organising committee for the 2010 breakfast to be held on Thursday 25 November at the Holiday Inn Esplanade.

We are excited that our speaker for the breakfast in 2010 is Flinders Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Prof Michael Kidd AM, who is also a White Ribbon Ambassador. This will be the sixth breakfast that we have held and they get bigger each year. It was particularly gratifying that the percentage of males attending in 2009 exceeded that of females for the first time.

The aim of the event is to raise awareness of the issue of gender based violence and to encourage men and women in our community not to condone attitudes and behaviour that supports or excuses violence against women. Funds raised through the breakfast are provided to local awareness and support projects. Bookings will open shortly, please feel free to make enquiries to mary.pocock@flinders.edu.au 8922 7785 or bilawara.lee@flinders.edu.au 8946 6921

Staff Profile: Bilawara Lee

Bilawara Lee is an Elder of the Larrakia Nation of Darwin NT and her name means “Black Cockatoo".

She is a cross cultural awareness and cultural protocols trainer, conflict resolution mediator and authorised marriage celebrant. Bilawara has over 60 years experience working, living and being part of a vibrant and highly respected Australian Aboriginal family. She is acknowledged and respected as a community communicator, healer and teacher of the ancient wisdoms of Aboriginal Spirituality and Healing.

Bilawara was the Manager of the Ngunnawal Center for the University of Canberra for over 18 years, and was the Office Manager for the Aboriginal Mental Health Training course at the Djirruwang Program at Charles Sturt University.

Her previous occupation before joining Flinders was as the Manager of the Indigenous Development Unit for Menzies School of Health Research. At Menzies Bilawara developed and taught the short course: “Doing It Right: Cultural Protocols for Working in Aboriginal Communities and How to Heal Aboriginal People in a White Man’s Health System”.

Bilawara's current professional interest is in bringing to the NT Medical Program all her knowledge and skills not only with student support but with the teaching of cultural protocols and Aboriginal spirituality and healing beliefs, rituals and ceremonies for all the students in the medical program.
Palmerston Superclinic News

Dr Mark Cavill has been appointed as the inaugural Medical Director of the Palmerston Super Clinic and Charles Darwin Universities) and will provide an ideal venue for developing new models of primary health care and training medical, nursing and allied health students. The Superclinic will have the dual aims of community service provision and student training.

Mark Cavill has previously worked in the Northern Territory for the Royal Flying Doctor Service in Tennant Creek. Most recently he has been in Melbourne.

Mark Foster has been a long term practice manager in rural South Australia. His practice partnered with Flinders University’s Parallel Rural Curriculum programme so Mark is very familiar with the Flinders model of medical student training and service provision.

We warmly welcome both Marks to the Northern Territory.

Staff Updates

Associate Dean, Flinders NT
Prof Sarah Strasser has accepted the position of Associate Dean, Flinders Northern Territory. It is a pleasure to welcome Sarah back to the school in this key leadership role in the NT. She will be based in Darwin commencing at the end of September. Sarah was previously employed with Flinders University as the Associate Dean of Rural & Remote Health and Director of CBME and NTRCS. Sarah’s most recent position since leaving Flinders in 2008 is with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine as the division head of Human Sciences.

Senior Lecturer, Alice Springs
Dr Nina Kilfoyle has been appointed as our new Senior Lecturer in Rural Medicine in Alice Springs.

Staff Departure
We farewell Dr Charles Mutandwa, former Senior Lecturer in Katherine. Students and staff will all miss Dr Mutandwa and wish him the very best in the future. Prof Michael Lowe is currently visiting the Year 3 Flinders students in Katherine once a week in order to maintain their teaching activities.

Northern Territory Clinical School
Northern Territory Rural Clinical School
Teaching Health Students in the Northern Territory

The Northern Territory Clinical School and Rural Clinical School (NTCS & NTRCS) are part of Flinders University School of Medicine and are leading providers of health education in the Northern Territory, Australia.

The schools provides training for Flinders University and James Cook University medical students. They also provides placement opportunities and support for Allied Health students and interstate medical students.

The NTCS has a campus in Darwin, whilst the NTRCS has campuses in Alice Springs, Katherine, Nhulunbuy and Humpty Doo.