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## Network Dates:

DHS meeting  
19/01/2009

Reference group  
meeting 09/02/2009

Loddon Mallee Allied  
Health Conference  
27/02/09

## Newsletter submissions:

Submissions to  
be emailed to  
[sharris@bendigohealth.org.au](mailto:sharris@bendigohealth.org.au)

## NEWS FROM THE NETWORK

As another year comes to an end it seems fitting to briefly review some of the activities for the Loddon Mallee Allied Health Network (LMAHN) for 2008 and look forward to 2009.

### 2008 – Year in review

- Conference – the annual conference was held in Swan Hill on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Attended by 65 people it received positive feedback. Report available.
- Website – website usage has continued to increase with greater numbers of people accessing the website and more information being forwarded for inclusion on the website.
- Introduction of education programs – The LMAHN education programs on “Building evidence for practice” and “Supporting clinical educators” commenced in July. The topics were identified as areas of need by clinicians and the programs developed in further consultation with clinicians. 11 sessions have been held to date and further sessions will occur on 2009.
- Representation of allied health professionals including on the Loddon Mallee Strengthening Palliative Care Consortium, at the DHS Allied health forum (which will inform the DHS Allied Health Strategy) and at the DHS Clinical placements forum and the Loddon Mallee region follow up meeting
- Assisting with arranging training through the CPD for allied health program and MentoringWorks
- Working with Region of Choice
- Providing information on CPD, funding, clinical placements, accessing journal articles, videoconferencing, etc as requested by allied health professionals.

### Looking forward to 2009

Some of the areas to be addressed in 2009 include:

- CPD - It is hoped that there will be improved communication of CPD events throughout the region in 2009 and increased use of videoconferencing. There is a range of high quality education already being delivered in the region so the aim is to better advertise events through the weekly emails and the website – [www.alliedhealthnetwork.org.au](http://www.alliedhealthnetwork.org.au) It is recognised that that larger departments throughout the region have access to resources not available to others and the aim is to allow this to benefit allied health across the region. If you have suggestions for topics for CPD in 2009 please let me know.  
The LMAHN education programs will continue in 2009. Again feedback or topic suggestions are welcomed.
- Clinical placements – DHS have reviewed undergraduate clinical placements and work is to commence in 2009 on improving the coordination of placements for allied health, nursing and medical undergraduates across the Loddon Mallee region.
- LMAHN reference group – The reference group will be reviewing the direction of the LMAHN. Allied health professionals will be asked to have input into this review which aims to ensure that the network meets the needs of allied health professionals in the region.
- Conference – Further information is included on page 2 about the Loddon Mallee Allied Health Conference to be held on Friday February 27<sup>th</sup> 2009.

Thanks to everyone for your support and ideas in 2009. Best wishes for a fantastic festive season and for 2009.

Sally Harris, Coordinator, LMAHN ([sharris@bendigohealth.org.au](mailto:sharris@bendigohealth.org.au))



### **2009 Loddon Mallee Allied Health Conference CHANGE: EMBRACE WHAT'S NEW**

The 2009 Loddon Mallee Allied Health Conference will be held in **Bendigo** on Friday **February 27 2009**. Mark the date in your diaries. This conference offers the opportunity to learn about other health services and network with allied health professionals from across the region.

The call for papers closed on December 1<sup>st</sup> and the conference committee have now reviewed the abstracts which were received. The program is currently being finalised and will be sent out with the registration form as soon as possible. The day will include presentations on:

- Allied Health and the Medicare MBS items
- Communicative Access
- Working with generational diversity

And a range of other presentations of interest to allied health professionals.

Prices have been kept at the same rate as last year to make keep it as affordable as possible.

A big thank you to the conference committee Nicola Baldwin, Virginia Bennett, Casey James, Brian Kelly, Helen McBurney, and Carol Parker for their hard work to date.

### **2009 RURAL ALLIED HEALTH POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS**

Closing Date 13 February 2009

A reminder that applications are still being taken for the Rural Allied Health Postgraduate Scholarship Program. This program supports rural allied health practitioners who have demonstrated their involvement in, and commitment to, rural allied health practice to improve their skills and expertise through postgraduate studies. The financial support provided to practitioners through the scholarship program aims to assist them in meeting the additional expenses often borne by rural practitioners accessing education.

Postgraduate scholarships are available for permanent or contract employees of a public sector health services (RRMA 3-7) who intend to commence an eligible postgraduate course in 2009. Scholarships will be granted for postgraduate studies in either an allied health specific discipline or management, health promotion and public health studies.

The level of funding for Postgraduate Scholarships varies according to the level of qualification being attained:

PhD \$10000	Masters \$7500	Graduate Diploma \$5000
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For further information, including the guidelines and application form, go to <http://www.vha.org.au/>

### **FUNDING FOR RURAL ALLIED HEALTH TO PARTICIPATE IN CPD**

The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for allied health practitioners provides up to \$1,000 per successful applicant to assist rural Victorian allied health practitioners to attend conferences and skill development opportunities.

It is available all year round although applications need to be lodged 2 months prior to the event. This fund does not assist with formal tertiary qualifications.

The guidelines and applications forms are available from the VHA website – <http://www.vha.org.au/>

### **VICTORIAN STROKE CLINICAL NETWORK POST GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS 2009**

Closing date: 12/01/09

These scholarships aim to increase access to postgraduate study for nurses and allied health professionals working in the areas of stroke care. Scholarship funding is intended as a contribution toward the costs of study. There are several scholarships available in each of two categories:

1. Single subject scholarships of \$2000
2. Masters and higher degree scholarships of \$5000

Further information is available from

[http://www.health.vic.gov.au/clinicalnetworks/strokescholars\\_hips](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/clinicalnetworks/strokescholars_hips)

## AIDS AND EQUIPMENT PROGRAM SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

A range of consultations have recently occurred to discuss the Aids and Equipment Program (AEP) service delivery model. The following is a report from one meeting held on Wed 19th November in Melbourne.

The aim of the consultations is to discuss the AEP model of the future. There is a discussion paper on the DHS website at [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/ds/aep](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/ds/aep). Clinicians are encouraged to provide feedback either at a consultation session or by a written submission.

The main points I think we need to be aware of is it is likely to have one central area where all referrals will go and DHS have provided three options for what happens then.

Option 1: is having a statewide issuing centre. The strengths of this would be greater equity across the state on how funding is allocated and managing waiting lists. The weaknesses could be difficulty of having local links for maintenance and repair of equipment. This may mean that the local AEP service providers we currently work with will not be there. We need to consider what impact would this have on our clients and on us as clinicians working outside of Melbourne.

Option 2: two statewide issuing centres, one for adults and one for children.

Option 3: five issuing centres one for adults, one for children, Vehicle Modifications, Lymphodema Compression Garments, Electronic Communications.

For all the systems the concerns were about access re-issuing equipment, storing and maintaining equipment, low cost items (below \$250) being non returnable. Other considerations were regarding co-payments, and introducing means testing.

If you have any comments on the issues or the options raised by DHS go along to a consultation session or send in a written response to DHS. I think it would be good for allied health working in smaller centres to make sure their voice is being heard. Also it would be good to hear from those who are familiar with other models, e.g. DVA, who can draw out the strengths of those systems for clients and clinicians so they can be incorporated into the AEP model. The closing date for feedback is Friday February 6 2009. The discussion paper includes questions you might like to consider in writing your responses.

Another thing to be aware of is DHS will be conducting a project to review the home modifications section and prescribing therapists. This will be undertaken in the first half of 2009 when the service delivery model project is completed. Occupational therapists will need to keep a look out for this.

If AEP is your passion or frustration now is your time to inform DHS.

Monique Baxter

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### ONCOLOGY SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

It has been suggested that an Oncology Special Interest Group commence in the Loddon Mallee region with an initial meeting planned in early 2009. Anyone interested in participating please contact Rosalind Deacon

Senior Clinician Physiotherapist

Bendigo Health

[rdeacon@bendigohealth.org.au](mailto:rdeacon@bendigohealth.org.au)

5454 8789

Videoconferencing may be utilised.

### USEFUL WEBSITES

The following websites may be of interest to some:

- <http://www.lmcancersupport.com.au>

Includes information for cancer patients, their carers and the community of the Loddon Mallee Region.

- <http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au>

The Health Translation Directory – provides links to brochures on a range of health topics in several languages.

### LODDON MALLEE ALLIED HEALTH NETWORK 2008-09 EDUCATION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS Remaining dates

Date	Building evidence for practice (1st Monday of each month 4pm)	Supporting clinical educators (3rd Monday of each month 4pm)
	Topic	Topic
02/02/09	Choosing and implementing qualitative designs	
16/02/09		Preventing burnout – looking after yourself/ juggling your caseload and students
02/03/09	Choosing and implementing quantitative designs	
16/03/09		Evaluating your teaching/ Developing a teaching portfolio
06/04/09	Designing and implementing studies with a clinical intervention component	
20/04/09		Further topic raised during program – if relevant
04/05/09	Communicating research results - Report writing. - Writing for publication. - Conference presentations – oral and posters.	
18/05/09		Further topic raised during program – if relevant
01/06/09	Post-graduate qualification opportunities	

Dates/topics may be subject to change