



QUEENSLAND WOMEN'S HEALTH NETWORK NEWS

AUG/SEPT 2012 'Aims to strengthen links between women by providing access to information and support'

ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S HEALTH

Celebrating International Women's Day The Woorabinda Way



Local Red Cross staff perform a skit about lateral violence during the women's health forum held in Woorabinda, Queensland.

A series of interactive presentations took place in Woorabinda as part of International Women's Day celebrations in March 2012. A women's health forum brought together local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women,

Red Cross staff, Queensland Health staff, and women from the Queensland Women's Health Network.

This wasn't just an event where the audience sat around listening to a panel of experts talking. According

to Janelle Evans, case manager at the Red Cross operated Gumbi Gumbi Women's and Children's Wellbeing Centre in Woorabinda, this was an event where the experts learnt to listen and local women learnt to lead.

IN THIS EDITION ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S HEALTH

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Leadership is a really important thing to happen according to Janelle. "Woorabinda is a very male orientated place so women feel intimidated going to meetings and men get all the good jobs," Janelle said. "Women still suffer a high incidence of domestic violence. There's an imbalance in the power."

The forum set about changing this dynamic with a series of workshops focusing on communication, women's health, parenting and lateral violence.

Janelle says that they, as local women, were determined to set the agenda before the day began. "Before the forum I spoke with the Queensland Women's Health Network and said we don't want to go to an event where they do all the talking and we do all the listening," Janelle said. "We wanted it

to be interactive. So the Network came along with a puzzle and we discussed what are the things that affect us from both inside and outside our environment and then we put all the pieces of the puzzle together."

The women had also heard about a parenting program and included parenting as a workshop topic. As an outcome of this workshop the women realised they needed to organise some kind of forum on child safety in the future.

"The idea of a workshop on communication came about because communication's always been a bit of a problem here," Janelle said. "In the past it's been more about being aggressive than assertive. The workshop

was really about learning to listen."

"The lateral violence workshop was about the tall poppy syndrome and always pulling other people down. So us Red Cross staff did a skit on lateral violence. We just know how it goes. Back stabbing, yarn carrying. The skit was a pretend argument that occurred around a card game that led to a family argument. Humour was used to highlight the issues around lateral violence. It was funny but it brought to light what we were talking about."

According to Libby Beckett, case worker for Red Cross, the women's forum was a fantastic event. "The topics that were discussed were current issues for all the women to take part in," Libby said. "Not only was the

OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER

will examine women's health issues on the topic of

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

DOES YOUR ORGANISATION HAVE EXPERTISE IN THIS AREA? OR ARE YOU A WOMAN WITH KNOWLEDGE / EXPERIENCE ON THIS TOPIC?

Share your insights with over 400 organisations, health workers, and other women in Queensland and beyond...

We welcome your articles, news items, or other submissions.

Please contact us in advance at: coordinator@qwhn.asn.au for full submission guidelines.

DEADLINE: 1 OCTOBER



Forum participants broke into groups to complete a jigsaw puzzle depicting some of the things about ourselves, our community, and our environment that can affect our health.

forum fun and exciting, with skits, games and arts and crafts, it was filled with plenty of information presented by local and visiting organisations.”

“Being a part of such a great event made me feel uplifted. I enjoyed the day mingling with all the local women and also our visitors. I hope that forums like these will continue to happen in Woorabinda in the future.”

This was the first women’s forum held in Woorabinda, an Aboriginal community two and a half hours drive inland from Rockhampton, Central Queensland, run by an Aboriginal Community Council. Thirty-five local women had the chance to learn about their health and issues that affect them in a fun and hands-on way.

“ Being a part of such a great event made me feel uplifted. ”

Since the forum, a council election was held and two women were elected to the Woorabinda Aboriginal Shire Council, where previously there were none. This was because after the forum, women realised that the only way they were going to get women’s issues addressed was to back them to stand for Council.

The interactive style of the workshop should come as no surprise to those in Woorabinda who have fashioned a unique place based governance structure. “We’ve got a governance group that directs what direction we are heading,” Janelle said. “Too many times government comes in and tells us what they want to do and how. So a number of the Brisbane based Red Cross staff sit on the governance group along with elders and locals. Red Cross and community sit together to make decisions about how and what Red Cross rolls out here.”

This is based on Red Cross’s core policy principle for engaging with Indigenous communities where Red Cross only works with communities that agree to our involvement and on the basis of a reciprocal partnership with these communities. This place based approach requires a consultative and responsive style of working where communities are actively involved in the planning, implementation and review of Red Cross responses.

Red Cross is committed to increasing our employment of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as they understand their communities, and help us work best together. Red Cross has ten full-time and four casual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in Woorabinda and more than a hundred across Australia. They work on a range of programs from supporting young people and families to community engagement.

For further information contact:

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Article by: Sarah Martin, Communications Account Manager, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Strategy, Red Cross.

Photos on pages 1 and 2 courtesy of Red Cross.

Editor’s Note:

QWHN Management Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the wonderful women who participated in and/or contributed their time, energy and ideas to make the Woorabinda Women’s Health Forum such a memorable event for everyone involved.



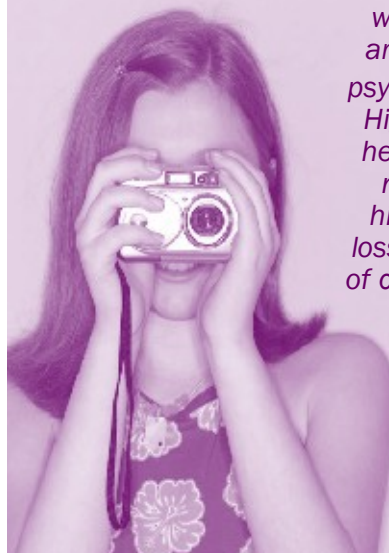
Above: Queensland Health staff (from Rockhampton) participated in the Woorabinda Women’s Health Forum and provided presentations, discussions, and printed information on: menopause, hysterectomy, sexual health, breast health, healthy weight, and looking after your liver.



Above: Queensland Women’s Health Network Representatives from across the State collaborated with local women in Woorabinda to facilitate interactive workshops on communication, lateral violence, parenting, and the social aspects of health. (From left): Belinda Hassan (Treasurer/Secretary & Central [Sth] Qld Rep.); Dr Betty McLellan (Chairperson & Nth Qld Rep.); Maree Hawken (Coordinator); Romina Fujii (Far Nth Qld Rep.); and Sue Manthey (Central Qld [West & Islands] Rep.)

snapshot

NATIONAL WOMEN’S HEALTH POLICY



“ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have been found to be twice as likely as non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to report high and very high levels of psychological distress.¹⁹⁶ Higher rates of mental health issues ... can be related to a cultural history of trauma and loss linked to the impact of colonisation and family removal.¹⁹⁷ (p. 54) ”

Excerpts from the National Women’s Health Policy 2010 used by permission of the Australian Government.

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (2010) National Women’s Health Policy 2010, DoHA, Canberra.

Our women carry so much love in our hearts

but also so much on our shoulders

‘Gallang’ in the local Jagera/Yuggera language means ‘healing’. Gallang Place to me is a place of healing. It was the first stand-alone Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander based counselling organisation in Queensland.

It was developed in the Brisbane community on the principles of self-determination and to offer a holistic approach to the health and well-being of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Gallang Place’s framework is responsive to the historical, cultural, social and emotional needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their families, and their community. We service the urban area, however lots of our mob come in from other communities.

As a female counsellor, I want to acknowledge that us Indigenous women are first of all mothers, wives, grandmothers, aunties, nieces, sister girls, tiddas, mentors and that we are the backbone nurturers and carers, helping our families and communities in addressing issues relating to well-being.

Our Indigenous women saw the need for leadership roles that were not met or being addressed because of the impact of colonisation and what it has done to our culture, country and to our Indigenous men.

Our health, emotionally, physically, spiritually and mentally is paramount. For us to give the needed support to our families and communities we need to have our own health right first. This must come from the inner spirit of our heart to be effective. However there are so many issues that we have to contend with every day, juggling or multi-tasking roles eg: children, work, shopping, school, study, stolen

generation, country, language, racism, lack of cultural understanding, government policies, drugs and alcohol, domestic violence, abuse, and lateral violence, to name a few.

All these issues impact on our mental, social, spiritual and emotional well-being. It’s easy to get stressed or lose our focus when things are not working how we would like them to. We are so worried about caring for others within our family, and this very often

“ It’s easy to get stressed ... when things are not working how we would like them to. ”

includes extended family, that we neglect ourselves to the point of feeling exhausted. There’s just no more fuel left in our social, spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical tank.

We think that we shouldn’t feel this way because it is up to us to be the SUPER mum, aunt, grandma, sissy, tidda or sister girl. Not giving or allowing ourselves permission for time out to nurture and refuel ourselves can lead to feelings of being overwhelmed.

Many of our Indigenous women come into Gallang Place for a one-to-one with a female counsellor to address a variety of issues. Gallang Place provides a safe place for them to yarn. We want our women to be respected and feel that someone cares and is non-judgemental.

Many women have commented that just yarning with another Murri woman helps them to express their problems to someone who understands where they are coming from. And from there maybe some coping strategies can be worked out.

At Gallang Place we use culturally

appropriate counselling and offer a variety of therapies that work for our mob. Some of the therapies used are Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Be Set Fast Free Therapies, Narrative Therapy, Music, Sand Play and Art and Dance.

Indigenous women’s health is so important. Our women carry so much love in our hearts but also so much on our shoulders and this is why it’s vital that we have good cultural support in place from family and our community.

Signing off for now

Batasi Morris

(Programs Manager/ Counsellor)

On behalf of

GALLANG PLACE

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WEST END QLD 4101

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Email: reception@gallangplace.org.au

www.gallangplace.org.au



Batasi is a Badu Island woman and has been with Gallang Place for over 11 years.

Jean Hailes Women's Health Specialists Now Open for Regional & Remote Women of Australia

In July 2011 the federal government announced the introduction of Telehealth consultations under Medicare for those living in eligible outer metropolitan areas. These consultations are delivered via a video and audio link and women can connect directly with a specialist, or can attend at their GP clinic and be supported by their GP during the Telehealth consultation.

For Jean Hailes Medical Centre for Women in suburban Melbourne (part of

the Jean Hailes for Women's Health organisation), this meant the medical centre could join the research and education arms in reaching women across the nation, a concept that was hugely exciting to us.

Our first step was to look at how we could deliver the Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) clinic remotely as we had received tremendous interest from interstate women. In November 2011 we held our first Telehealth consultation with Endocrinologist, Dr Anju Joham and

a Northern Territory GP and patient. The consultation was hugely successful and all parties were asked for their feedback after the session to ensure it was a success. Which it was!

Now we've broadened this even further and in July will be launching podcasts of the three education sessions provided as part of the PCOS clinic

model. This means women who connect via Telehealth for their medical appointments are still accessing the educational components of the service to assist in their self-management.

But it's not just the PCOS Clinic women can access. All of our women's health specialist endocrinologists and gynaecologists are happy to take Telehealth consultations where clinically appropriate.

Telehealth has been pivotal in enabling Jean Hailes to truly achieve the vision of providing physical and emotional health and wellbeing in all its dimensions for all Australian women throughout their lives.

More information on Jean Hailes for Women's Health and Telehealth can be found at:

www.jeanhailes.org.au

<<http://www.jeanhailes.org.au/medical/telehealth>>

<<http://www.jeanhailes.org.au/medical/jean-hailes-pcos-service>>

<<http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/mbsonline-telehealth-landing.htm>>

<<http://www.racgp.org.au/telehealth>>

<<http://www.racgp.org.au/standards/telehealth>>



CHILDREN BY CHOICE
ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

40 Years • 200,000 Women • Still Supporting Choice

UNPLANNED PREGNANCY: PREVENTION, RESPONSES AND OPTIONS

BRISBANE, 7 SEPTEMBER 2012

This one day professional forum is part of Children by Choice's 40th anniversary commemorations. It will incorporate presentations, interactive panel discussions and skills development workshops around the themes of unplanned pregnancy, sexuality education, contraception, pregnancy options, young people in care, adoption, pregnancy health and abortion access, with a keynote address by author and cartoonist KAZ COOKE.

Registrations close 31 August. For more information or to register, visit www.childrenbychoice.org.au, email admin@childrenbychoice.org.au or call (07) 3357 9933.

the challenges of food supply in remote Indigenous communities

All Australians need good food to stay healthy, and this is particularly important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for two reasons. Firstly, the populations are relatively young, with more mothers, babies and young children who have higher nutrition needs. Secondly, rates of chronic disease are higher, and eating good food is an essential part of the prevention and management of most chronic diseases.

What is the problem and why?

People living in remote communities pay more for food, particularly for fresh fruit and vegetables, and quite often the quality of this produce does not compare to what is sold in the cities. Not only that, many fresh foods are not always available due to geographical isolation, weather patterns, and poor storage facilities in some remote stores.

What is being done about it?

The problems with food supply to remote Indigenous communities have long been acknowledged. The Queensland Government, along with IBIS stores in the Cape are running a nutrition program through some stores, which includes activities like in-store cooking demonstrations, shelf labelling of healthier foods, and providing guidance for store managers on healthier foods that they can stock on the shelves.



food files

with Deanne

NUTRITION MANAGER, HEART FOUNDATION

How can you be an advocate for healthy food in your community?

All people working in remote Indigenous communities can help improve the food supply by:

- Creating a healthy catering policy for your workplace so only healthy food is served
- Talking to the elders of the community (if appropriate) about the problems poor nutrition can cause and getting support for improvements in what the local store sells
- Supporting local food production like market, community and school gardens and using traditional foods whenever possible.

For more information about nutrition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, visit: <http://www.healthinfor.net.ecu.edu.au/health-risks/nutrition>



what's on?

Important Events, Conferences and Workshops

**10 SEPT
2012**

INTERNATIONAL GYN AWARENESS DAY—Gynaecological Awareness Information Network

An initiative of GAIN Inc that aims to create a higher awareness of GYN and Sexual Health. GYN conditions include polycystic ovaries, endometriosis, infertility, menopause, prolapse uterus, STI's, vulval, vaginal and anal conditions; all of which involve a high level of pain, discomfort and personal suffering, and many of which women choose to suffer in silence due to the associated stigmas. For INFORMATION visit: <http://gain.org.au/>

**20-21 SEPT
2012**

16th ANNUAL CHRONIC DISEASES NETWORK CONFERENCE – DARWIN, NT.

Promoting Healthy Childhood – Preventing Chronic Conditions

The conference program will explore the range of factors during the early years that contribute to chronic conditions later in life. Chronic conditions can be the result of influences during pregnancy, childhood, or adolescence. Influences on chronic conditions later in life include whether a mother smokes in pregnancy, a child's diet and level of physical activity, exposure to domestic violence, parenting, and social determinants of health. FOR INFORMATION visit: <http://www.cdnconference.com.au/>

**24-28 SEPT
2012**

INTERNAT. NETWORK OF INDIGENOUS HEALTH KNOWLEDGE & DEVELOPMENT 5th Biennial Conference – BRISBANE.

Building Resilience: Renewing Individuals, Families and Communities

The INHKD Conference will be held at University of Queensland (St Lucia Campus), Brisbane. FOR INFORMATION visit: <http://www.inihkd.org/>

**24-27 OCT
2012**

CRANaplus 30TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE – CAIRNS, QLD.

Remote Pearls of Wisdom

CRANaplus is the professional voice of remote health professionals in Australia. The organisation was founded in 1983 when 130 remote area nurses from across Australia came together in Alice Springs to put remote health issues on the national agenda.

FOR INFORMATION visit: <http://www.crana.org.au/201-cranaplus-30th-conference.html>

**20-21 Nov
2012**

FIRST NATIONAL SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CONFERENCE – MELBOURNE, VIC.

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA), in partnership with Sexual Health and Family Planning Australia (SHFPA) announce the first Australian conference to bring together practitioners, policy makers, scholars and others enthusiastic about improving the sexual and reproductive health of all Australians.

FOR INFORMATION visit: <http://www.phaa.net.au/NSRHConference.php>

**7-10 MAY
*2013***

7th AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S HEALTH CONFERENCE – SYDNEY, NSW.

Gender Matters – Determining Women's Health (Call for abstracts open until 30 September 2012)

The 7th Australian Women's Conference will continue Australia's focus on showcasing cutting edge research and best practice approaches in women's health policy and practice locally, across Australia and internationally. 'Gender Matters: Determining Women's Health' promises to be vibrant and energising in every respect.

The Conference is relevant to: service providers, policy makers, managers, researchers, women's health, mental health, community health, social and community services, Aboriginal controlled services, migrant and refugee services, reproductive services, legal services, universities, disability services, allied health care, public health, educators, academics, local councils, Local Health Districts, Medicare Locals, Government, non-government and private sectors.

FOR INFORMATION visit: <http://www.womenshealth2013.org.au>



women's health on the net

Hot Spots on the Internet for Women

INDIGENOUS ALLIED HEALTH AUSTRALIA (IAHA)

www.indigenousalliedhealth.com.au

This website is for Indigenous allied health and other health professionals and students wishing to network together, share information and ideas and join in activities. The website is also for non-Indigenous allied health professionals and students who wish to be better informed about Indigenous Australians' culture, society and requirements of health services.

The site also contains video clips encouraging young Indigenous people to see allied health as a career option.

NGAANYATJARRA PITJANTJATJARA YANKUNYTJATJARA WOMEN'S COUNCIL

www.npywc.org.au/index.html

The NPYWC began in 1980 following the South Australian Pitjantjatjara Land Rights struggle. During consultations, many women felt that their views were ignored, so they established their own organisation. Its region covers 350,000 square kilometres of the remote tri-State cross-border area of Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory. What began as an advocacy organisation is now also a major provider of human services in the

region including a domestic violence service and young people's program. The website also describes the Ara Irititja (Stories from a long time ago) project which brings back home materials of cultural and historical significance to Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara people (collectively called Anangu). Materials include photographs, films, sound recordings and documents. A computer archive digitally stores repatriated materials and other contemporary items. Anangu of all ages can sit and listen to their stories, look at photos of people, events and communities, and add information.

25 years of dedication
to women's health

Australian Women's Health Network Anniversary

The Australian Women's Health Network celebrated its 25th Anniversary earlier this year with a reception hosted by its patron Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC CVO, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. The afternoon tea reception was held in the beautiful gardens of Government House, Canberra, and attended by representatives and supporters of the Network, with a number of its founding members in attendance. The Governor-General's speech can be read at: <http://www.gg.gov.au/event.php/view/id/1524/title/governor-general-marks-25th-anniversary-of-the-australian-womens-health-network>

Since its inception, AWHN members have shared a commitment and determination to promoting the right of all Australian women to health and well-being, and volunteered their time, energy and considerable skills to this end. AWHN now has over 216 organisational and individual members from around the country and representatives in every state and territory.

A current area of AWHN's work is the development of a series of position papers to inform Government policy on women's health in the areas of: Health and Well-being; Health Reform; Sexual and Reproductive Health; and Mental Health. Soon to be released, the papers draw together the evidence on the need for research, policy development, population health planning and programs to be gender-sensitive if they are to be effective, and provide recommendations for achievable actions and reforms that would significantly improve health outcomes for women and support the health of the broader community.

For more information contact:

Kelly Banister, National Coordinator
Australian Women's Health Network
Email: kelly.banister@bigpond.com
Ph: 0408 061 901
www.awhn.org.au

For information about the
**7th AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S
HEALTH CONFERENCE**

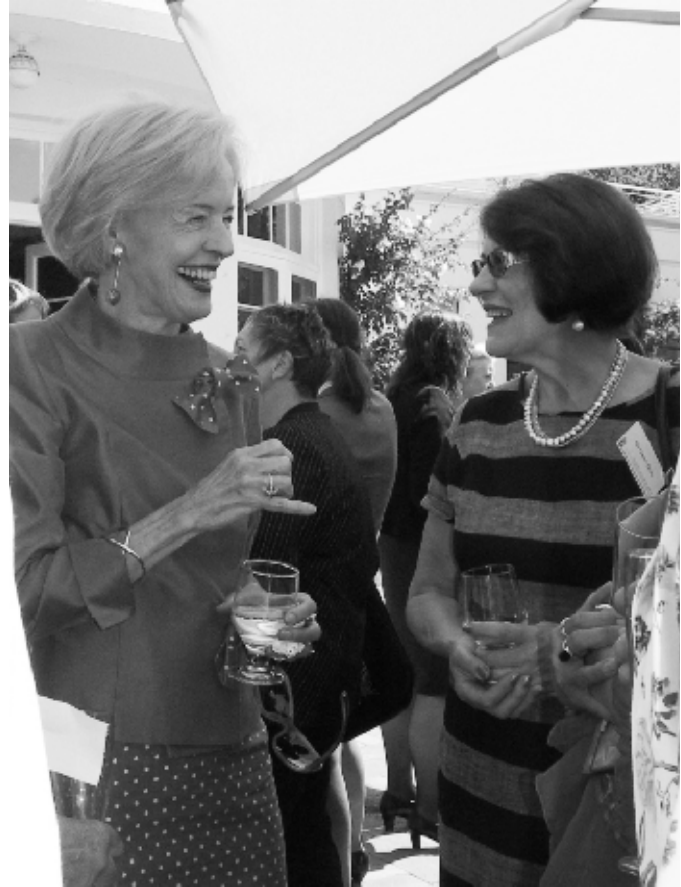
visit the conference website:

www.womenshealth2013.org.au

*The Call for Abstracts closes on
30 September 2012*

Photos From Top:
AWHN Patron
Her Excellency
Ms Quentin Bryce AC CVO,
Governor-General
of the Commonwealth of
Australia chats with
AWHN Convenor
Dr Gwendolyn Gray
Jamieson (on right)
and other guests
during the
25th Anniversary
Reception held at
Government House
in Canberra.

Photos courtesy of AWHN
Photographer: Tracey Wing



7th Australian
women's
health
conference



AUSTRALIAN
WOMEN'S
HEALTH
NETWORK
GENDER MATTERS:
DETERMINING WOMEN'S HEALTH
7-10 MAY 2013 | SYDNEY



DocLIST resource expands

now including mental health

DocLIST is an online list of doctors and mental health professionals who have been recommended by lesbians and bisexual women, found at www.doclist.com.au. Recently the DocLIST team have started accepting recommendations of mental health professionals as this is an important area of health for many lesbian and bisexual women.

There are currently 56 general practitioners, 20 specialists, 6 mental health professionals and 2 dentists on the list, covering all Australian states and territories except Western Australia. DocLIST now needs recommendations of more doctors and mental health professionals from all around Australia so that a large number of women can benefit from it. Once a recommendation is received the health professional is contacted to let them know about the project and ask whether they agree to be added to the list. The health professional is not told

who recommended them.

DocLIST is run by the Australian Lesbian Medical Association (ALMA) who were awarded a grant in 2011 by Linc (Lesbians Inc) to assist them in funding the administration of the list. The Pink Sofa have also supported the project by promoting it on their website.

The list was set up in response to a clear need from the community. ALMA is frequently asked by lesbian and bisexual women for recommendations of lesbian/bi-friendly doctors in their area. The DocLIST project aims to make lesbian-sensitive and bi-sensitive health care available to as many Australian women as possible to congratulate health professionals who are providing an excellent service to lesbian and bisexual women.

Lesbian and bisexual women can go to www.doclist.com.au to find or recommend a doctor or mental health professional. They can help this resource grow by recommending appropriate professionals and by spreading the word among their friends and contacts.

If you would like to know more, go to www.doclist.com.au or email the DocLIST Coordinator Dr Sarah Burrowes: alma.doclist@gmail.com



7th Australian Women's Health Conference

GENDER MATTERS:
DETERMINING WOMEN'S HEALTH
7-10 May 2013

www.womenshealth2013.org.au

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**CHAIRPERSON &
North Qld Representative**

Dr Betty McLellan

**TREASURER/SECRETARY &
Central (South) Qld Representative**

Belinda Hassan

Far North Qld Representative

Romina Fujii

Central (West) Qld Representative

Sue Manthey

South Qld Representative

Vacant

HAVE YOUR SAY...



We are interested in your feedback on the quality of the newsletter, and issues and topics you would like to see in future editions.

If you have something to say please contact Maree Hawken on (07) 4789 0665 or email us at: coordinator@qwhn.asn.au

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MEMBERSHIP

To become a member of QWHN, simply fill in this form and send to QWHN at PO Box 1855, THURINGOWA BC, QLD 4817

Membership of the Network is open to women's organisations and individual women who are in agreement with the Network's purpose and objectives.

Name:	NEW MEMBER? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Address:	
Phone:	Fax:
Email/Web:	
Profession / Organisation (if applicable):	
MEMBERSHIP FEES: Individual (unwaged or student) — \$5.50; Individual (waged) — \$11.00; Organisation — \$33.00	

Please find enclosed a cheque/money order for \$ for one financial year's membership (1 July 2012–30 June 2013)

Do you consent to your name, as part of the membership list, being distributed for networking purposes? YES NO

I/We hereby agree to abide by the Purpose, Objectives and Policies of the QWHN. (see website www.qwhn.asn.au)

Signature

Date

**TAX INVOICE
ABN 11700374032**