

...healthy and sustainable rural, regional and remote communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health in focus at rural health symposium

12 March 2020

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is the theme of an upcoming plenary session at the 7th Rural and Remote Health Scientific Symposium, which will be held in Alice Springs on 25-26 May 2020.

The session will feature three Territorians – Dr Danny Tsai, Infectious Diseases Pharmacist at the Alice Springs Hospital; Associate Professor Jaquelyne Hughes, Principal Research Fellow at the Menzies School of Health Research; and Professor Louise Maple-Brown, Senior Principal Research Fellow at the Menzies School of Health Research.

Dr Tsai, an Alice Springs-based pharmacist and Rural Pharmacy Liaison Officer at Flinders University, will focus his presentation on antibiotic dosing in Indigenous patients with sepsis. His research suggests that we may need to adjust antibiotic dosing in critically ill Indigenous patients to avoid under-dosing.

“There are questions around appropriate dosing of antibiotic in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with serious infections, particularly in light of the increased disease burden in this population. In collaboration with researchers and clinicians in multiple centres, my research aims to address this important question. I will also share my experience as a researcher in remote Australia.”

Associate Professor Hughes, a Torres Strait Islander woman and Darwin-based clinical researcher, will present on renal care in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and in particular the rapid progression of chronic kidney disease. Her research draws on the eGFR study, a longitudinal study of kidney damage in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults in the Northern Territory.

"As a clinician-researcher working in Northern Australia, the knowledge developed from locally situated and culturally relevant research which is then translated into clinical practice is powerfully transformative for healthcare delivery and the positive outcomes we all seek to achieve" said Associate Professor Hughes.

Professor Maple-Brown is Chair of the NT Diabetes Network. Her research focuses on improving diabetes health outcomes in Aboriginal communities and draws on the Diabetes across the Lifecourse: Northern Australia Partnership which she established.

“Our Partnership is between researchers, health service providers, policy makers and communities across Northern Australia. We are working together to address the escalating epidemic of youth-onset diabetes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, commencing as early as possible in the life course (pre-conception).”

Further information on keynote speakers is available at <https://www.ruralhealth.org.au/7rrhs/program/keynote-speakers>

The National Rural Health Alliance is Australia's peak non-government organisation for rural and remote health.

Media enquiries:

Assoc Prof Hughes/Prof Maple-Brown – Courtney Wilson (Menzies communications) 0481 150 973

All other enquiries – Tim Hurd (National Rural Health Alliance) 0447 427 292