



Polio Australia Incorporated

Representing polio survivors throughout Australia



e-Bulletin February 2011

Recently it seems that every month has brought a new concern for Australians, with extreme weather conditions resulting in the loss of life, the destruction of homes and livelihoods, and the need to find ways to work through it all and “get on with it”. With this edition, our thoughts are with our close neighbours in Christchurch, New Zealand, having just experienced one of the most devastating earthquakes in its history. What we have witnessed in all these terrible events, is the amazing sense of kinship, understanding, support and resilience that binds communities and people who have survived a common tragedy. Sound familiar?

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National Disability Insurance Scheme Update



NDIS | Revolutionising disability services

On 28 February, the Productivity Commission (PC) proposed that the current disability support system be totally reformed as it is "underfunded, unfair, fragmented, and inefficient, and gives people with a disability little choice and no certainty of access to appropriate supports". The PC recommends a doubling of expenditure on disability support services - to \$12.5 billion.

Central to the reform is the proposal to establish two schemes: the larger being the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) to provide insurance cover for all Australians in the event of significant disability; and a smaller scheme, the

National Injury Insurance Scheme (NIIS) which would be a federated model of separate, state-based no-fault schemes providing nationally consistent lifetime care and support to all people newly affected by catastrophic injury. The PC's preference is that funding for the NDIS would come from the Australian Government directing payments from consolidated revenue into a 'National Disability Insurance Premium Fund'. Read more [here](#).

Improving Primary Health Care for All Australians

Primary health care is the part of the health system which Australians use the most. It is delivered in the community, outside of hospitals and covers a wide range of providers such as general practitioners, practice nurses, psychologists, physiotherapists, community health workers and pharmacists.

The Government is committed to improving Australia's health care system so that all Australians can access high quality services that meet their needs and the needs of their family which is outlined in a new booklet [Improving Primary Health Care for All Australians](#). This booklet explains why primary health care is important; why it needs to be improved and what the changes will mean. It also provides further details on Medicare Locals, and their central role in improving the primary health care system.

Getting Information about Medicines and Medical Devices Made Easier

Department of Health and Ageing, Media Release, 28 February 2011

Australians will now be able to more easily find information about medicines and medical devices approved for use by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing, Catherine King, has announced. View the full [media release here](#).



Polio: The Second Wave Study

With funding from [The Balnaves Foundation](#), Polio Australia has commissioned Access Economics to undertake a study into the prevalence and incidence of polio in Australia and to quantify the economic, social and public health burden of the Late Effects Of Polio (LEOP) in this country. The current situation where governments at all levels do little to directly assist people with the LEOP is leading to escalating costs both to the governments and to the community at large.

It is hoped that the study report will be launched during October's Polio Awareness campaign. We believe that it will substantially enhance Polio Australia's arguments for increased service provision for polio survivors throughout Australia, and improve our success in securing much needed funding to fulfill our charter. Our prime objective of not only increasing but improving the effectiveness of service delivery to people with the LEOP will thereby be achieved.

[Circumstances and Consequences of Falls in Polio Survivors](#)

Alice Bickerstaffe, MD, Anita Beelen, PhD and Frans Nollet, MD, PhD
From the Department of Rehabilitation AMC, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

This 2010 study shows that falls are a common problem among polio survivors and frequently lead to injuries, fear of falling and activity avoidance. The falls mainly occur during ambulation, inside the home and in the afternoon. Fear of falling, quadriceps weakness of the weakest leg and self-reported problems maintaining balance are independently associated with falls.



The conclusion stated that falls are an important problem for polio survivors. The frequency with which falls occur and the severity of the consequences merit the development of fall intervention strategies. As there are some essential differences between the fall mechanisms in our group and those that have been described previously in elderly people, existing fall intervention strategies cannot simply be applied to this group. Tailor-made interventions are required and, based on our findings, these should focus on: increasing safety of walking and reduction in domestic hazards, reduction in fear of falling and on increasing muscle strength or stability where possible (especially of the quadriceps). Meanwhile, additional research is necessary to elucidate the role of: orthoses, muscle weakness in the context of abnormal gait, sensory problems, fatigue and the possible causes of perceived loss of balance.

[Save Our Shoulders: A Guide for Polio Survivors](#)



The purpose of Save our Shoulders is to help polio survivors become more aware of the behaviours that can cause shoulder overuse and some of the treatment options that are available. While the information included in this manual is targeted to polio survivors, it will be useful to anyone with shoulder problems. Shoulder dysfunction is an orthopedic problem with similar symptoms in people with and without a history of polio. Treatment approaches are individualized and focus on minimizing or eliminating pain while maximizing function.

Save our Shoulders and other excellent resources for polio survivors can be found [here](#).

Rare strain of polio resurfaces in Burma

by Francis Wade —17 February 2011

A mass vaccination campaign is underway across Burma after reports surfaced of young children contracting a rare strain of the polio virus. The vaccine-derived poliovirus (VDPV) hadn't been seen in Burma for three years, until in December last year a seven-year-old girl fell ill and was diagnosed by health officials, the UN-run Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) reported. Read full report [here](#).

[Polio this week](#)

Source: *Polio Global Eradication Initiative*

Total cases	Year-to-date 2011	Year-to-date 2010	Total in 2010*
Globally	23	33	974
• in endemic countries:	10	28	232
• in non-endemic countries:	13	5	742



Polio Health and Wellness Retreat Program

Mt Eliza, Victoria — Thursday 28 April to Sunday 1 May

Don't miss out on this fantastic Retreat!

~ Places are still available ~

so download a [Registration Form](#) and book your experience today!

Below is a sample of the sessions you could be attending . . .

Thursday 28th April

Registration, Program Overview, Introductions

Friday 29th April (Body)

- ◆ All about scooters
- ◆ Tai Chi session for people with limited mobility
- ◆ Options for people with breathing problems
- ◆ Dysphagia (swallowing) management strategies
- ◆ Foot Care for Polio Feet
- ◆ Pain Management
- ◆ Allied Health professionals: Who does what?
- ◆ To brace or not to brace
- ◆ Aids and Equipment
- ◆ Exercise Myths and Facts
- ◆ Food for wellbeing
- ◆ Tour of Mt Eliza Rehab Centre

Evening Entertainment:
Trivial Pursuit



Saturday 30th April (Mind)

- ◆ Yoga
- ◆ Alexander Technique
- ◆ Keeping the mind active
- ◆ Early memories of having polio
- ◆ Finding your story
- ◆ Introduction to the Internet
- ◆ What you think is what you get
- ◆ Photography
- ◆ Learn to play Mahjong
- ◆ Cryptic Crosswords
- ◆ Bonsai
- ◆ Explore your inner artist
- ◆ Singing for health

Evening Entertainment:
Music by "Chicken Karma"

Sunday 1st May (Spirit)

- ◆ What is 'Spirit'?
- ◆ Meditation
- ◆ Naturopathy
- ◆ Balancing your life

This Retreat will be an experience to remember, and you are encouraged to bring along your loved one to share it with. Watch a video of the NSW Retreat [here](#).

Additional Sessions

- Free 1/2 hr Massage*
- Free 1/2 hr Acupuncture*
- Free Podiatry Appointment*
- Free Respiratory Assessment*
- Free Self-management Appointment*
- \$35 Physiotherapy Assessment*
- \$50 Orthotics Assessment*



A private beneficiary has generously donated \$1,000 to help subsidise Registration Fees for Victorians who are keen to attend the Retreat but are finding it difficult to raise the full amount. The subsidy amount available is **\$200 Single or \$300 Double** until funds run out. Contact the National Program Manager on Ph: 03 9016 7678 to discuss further.

Please pass this e-Bulletin on to friends and colleagues who have an interest in the late effects of polio

- ◆ If you are not the original recipient of this e-Bulletin and would like to receive it directly in future, please email us [here](#).
- ◆ If you do not wish to receive any further communication from Polio Australia, please email us [here](#).

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