



Polio Australia Incorporated

Representing polio survivors throughout Australia



e-Bulletin March Reflections 2011

March decided to throw up even greater challenges for our more distant northern neighbours, with Japan experiencing the massive earthquake and devastating tsunami that claimed so many lives. Post-Polio Health International (PHI) has been in touch with Japan's Sendai Polio Society and, as a result, invites people to contribute financially in support of these members. PHI will convert the funds to Japanese currency and send it directly to the Sendai Polio Society listing all contributors. The amount need not be large. Equally important is the fact we are letting them know we are concerned about them and their welfare. Please send donations by April 5th to: PHI, 4207 Lindell Blvd., #110, St. Louis, MO 63108-2930, USA — make the cheques payable to PHI and add "Japan" in the memo line. For those outside the USA, please email info@post-polio.org to enquire about credit card donations.

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[Australian Health Survey Gets Under Way](#)

Media Release: 4 March 2011

The Hon Nicola Roxon MP, Minister for Health and Ageing

The Hon Bill Shorten MP, Assistant Treasurer



The Australian Health Survey about to be undertaken will help with the design and planning of a more focussed health care system for all Australians. "Monitoring the nation's health using surveys such as this is the only way to know the size of potential problems, which groups in the population are most affected and whether the situation is changing over time" Mr Shorten said.

The first wave of the Australian Health Survey will be conducted over 2011-12 with summary results available in late 2012. The survey will involve about 50,000 randomly sampled adults and children from across Australia and will give a 'snapshot' of Australia's health.

If you happen to be one of the 50,000 people selected to be surveyed and have had polio, be sure to let the researchers know. Hopefully, this type of information will be part of the standard Q & A. If not, why not just leap right in?! To view the full media release, [click here](#).

[Food and Health Dialogue Communiqué](#)

Media Release: 25 March 2011

The Hon Catherine King MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing

The Australian Government Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing, Catherine King, today chaired the sixth meeting of the Food and Health Dialogue. The Dialogue brings together government, industry and public health groups with the aim of addressing poor dietary habits and making healthier food choices easier and more accessible for all Australians.



Members noted preliminary outcomes from the review of programs that are being undertaken nationally and internationally to address poor dietary intakes. Among the programs being reviewed are programs from the United Kingdom, Canada and Europe that look at product reformulation, portion size, and consumer messaging. Findings from the review will be used to inform future Dialogue activities. The review is scheduled for completion by mid 2011.

[Disability Care and Support](#)

The Productivity Commission was asked to examine the feasibility, costs and benefits of replacing the current system of disability services with a new arrangement that provides essential care and support for all Australians in the event of significant disability. *The fundamental draft conclusion is that the current arrangements are systemically flawed. New national insurance arrangements are feasible and achievable.*

The current system is poor. The current disability support system is underfunded, unfair, fragmented, and inefficient, and gives people with a disability little choice and no certainty of access to appropriate supports. It is not a 'system'.

It is feasible to design a new system for long-term disability care and support, bringing together the current fragmented and underfunded arrangements.

The Commission is proposing two schemes. The larger scheme, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, would be like Medicare, in that all Australians would know that they or their families would get long-term care and support if they acquired a significant disability. A second much smaller scheme would cover people's lifetime care and support needs if they acquired a catastrophic injury from any accident. Two schemes are justified, as there are already some well-functioning motor accident schemes that can be scaled up, the costs of amalgamation would provide few benefits over the near term, and the schemes have different funding sources and focuses.

The draft report was released on 28 February 2011. People are invited to examine [this report](#) and make written submissions to the Productivity Commission by **30 April 2011**.

[National Disability and Carer Congress: 2-3 May 2011](#)

Make Every Australian Count represents a not to be missed opportunity to examine, analyse, debate and discuss the proposal for a National Disability Insurance Scheme. The conference will examine the interim report on Disability Care and Support released by the Productivity Commission, hear from international experts regarding developments in disability policy around the world, and, most importantly, feature the hopes for reform of people with a disability, their families and carers. The time has come for transformational change – go along and hear what the future holds for people with a disability their families and carers and the organisations that support them in this country. [Online Registration](#) Registrations close at 5.00pm on Wednesday, 27 April 2011.

[Arthritis Awareness Week 2011](#)

Media Release: 31 March 2011

The Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing

"Chronic conditions involving the bones and joints are the leading cause of ongoing pain and disability in Australia and affect more than 6.3 million Australians", Minister for Mental Health and Ageing Mark Butler said.

Mr Butler announced that the Government will continue to fund this \$14.4 million initiative over four years to extend Better Arthritis and Osteoporosis Care (BAOC). The initiative will boost support for both primary care services and self-management help and information.

"I'm pleased that the extended BAOB initiative will now be able to assist even more people living with musculoskeletal conditions, along with the health providers who help to manage these conditions," Mr Butler said.

Arthritis Awareness Week is being held from Sunday 27 March to Saturday 2 April 2011 with Arthritis Australia conducting local activities and events in all Australian states and territories: www.arthritisaustralia.com.au

[Polio-World Photo Contest](#)



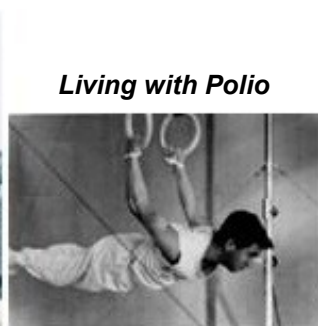
Polio-World is inviting people to send photographs showing their individual history of Polio. They are looking for three photos: the first one to show Polio, the second depicting Living with Polio and the third Adapting to Post-Polio.

Polio-World will use the photographs to create an awareness of post-polio and to show the world that WE ARE STILL HERE!

To participate, send your submission to: mickiminner@msn.com with a description of 50 words or less. Please put **Polio-World** in the subject line, a brief description of yourself in the e-mail (see example right), and attach your three photographs. Deadline is September 1, 2011. Be CREATIVE!



Polio



Living with Polio



Post Polio

My name is Charlie, and I live in Tucson, Arizona USA. I got polio in 1952 and starting having Post-polio symptoms around 1985. I am a retired surgical nurse, and a current glider pilot. Although I don't perform gymnastics anymore, I still haven't let Post-Polio stop me from being active.

[Don't let polio eradication slip away again](#)

Debora MacKenzie

New Scientist Health—Issue [2805](#)

29 March 2011

After years of frustration, polio is on the ropes. But we could still miss the historic opportunity to wipe it out for good.

It is the disease that's always down, but never quite out. In 1998 the World Health Organization claimed it was going to eradicate by 2000. In 2000 it [revised the target to 2005](#). Then it stopped setting deadlines - and the virus is still out there. Last year polio afflicted nearly 1300 people, and the virus has been making a comeback in countries where it had been stamped out. Senior public health experts have railed for years that attempts at polio eradication are a grandiose waste of money.

Until now. A sea change is taking place. Even the most outspoken former pessimists - including D. A. Henderson, who led smallpox eradication - are now talking about the era after polio. [Read more . . .](#)

[Vaccines need shot in the arm](#)

Pricilla Crighton

University World News—Issue: 164

27 March 2011



In 1998, the respected British medical journal *The Lancet* published a study linking the measles mumps rubella, or MMR, vaccine to regressive autism. Over the next 12 years, the report and its author Dr Andrew Wakefield troubled immunologists around the world who failed to replicate the findings.

In Australia, a Queensland immunologist based at CQUniversity, Dr John McGrath, said it appeared Wakefield used the fraudulent study to aid a legal claim against the MMR vaccine manufacturers.

In 1941, more than 890,000 cases of measles were reported in the US but by 1997 this had been reduced to 135 cases. Mumps dropped from more than 150,000 cases to just 612 while rubella fell from more than 57,000 to 161. Similar rates were found in Australia, which had just 10 reported cases of measles in 2005 although there were 43 cases in the first two months of 2011.

"Vaccines have led to the virtual eradication of some terrible infectious diseases including polio, smallpox, tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough, and have decimated rates of others like meningitis and pneumonia in vaccinated populations," McGrath said. "But with this enormous success, people are becoming complacent with vaccinations and now we are seeing some diseases making a comeback."

McGrath believes that to prevent major outbreaks of preventable diseases such as measles it is essential to establish a 'herd immunity' - achieved when 95% of the population is vaccinated. *"This means that even if you have not been vaccinated yourself, you can be protected because the virus or the bacteria can't live in a population where high numbers of people are vaccinated and therefore it can't move around and spread,"* he said.

More related information can be found on [Polio Australia's website](#) and through [Chain of Protection](#)

[Polio this week](#)

Source: *Polio Global Eradication Initiative*

Wild poliovirus (WPV) cases

Total cases	Year-to-date 2011	Year-to-date 2010	Total in 2010*
Globally	67	51	1294
• in endemic countries:	24	39	232
• in non-endemic countries:	43	12	1062



Polio Health and Wellness Retreat Program

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

Don't miss out on this fantastic Retreat!

~ only 10 places 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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