



Polio Australia Incorporated

Representing polio survivors throughout Australia



e-Bulletin November 2010

Pass it on . . .

We were very pleased with the positive response to our first ever e-Bulletin in October, so this month we're back with more Polio Australia news! Please make sure you pass this e-Bulletin on to friends and colleagues who have an interest in the late effects of polio.

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National Aids and Equipment Reform Alliance

The National Aids and Equipment Alliance strongly supports the establishment of an insurance-based Long Term Disability Care and Support scheme for people with severe and profound disabilities. In the absence of a national aids and equipment policy framework there is currently an inefficient and often ineffective patchwork of over 100 separate equipment schemes operating in Australia with inconsistent patterns of funding and service delivery. Read the [National Aids and Equipment Reform Alliance Submission](#) to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into a Long Term Disability Care and Support Scheme (10 September 2010).

National Polio Register

Polio Australia has been very pleased with the response received to date from polio survivors joining the National Polio Register and we thank you very much for your support. The large number of registrations which have been received are currently being collated by our volunteers – regular updates on how registrations are progressing will be published on the [Polio Australia website](#).

If you haven't signed up yet, please help us to get you the services you need by completing the form [online](#). Alternatively, you can download a PDF version of the [National Polio Register Form](#) if you (or a family member / friend without internet access) would prefer to complete the form by hand and mail it back to: Polio Australia, PO Box 500, East Kew Vic 3102

Clinical Advisory Group



Polio Australia has been busy recruiting a [Clinical Advisory Group](#) (CAG) comprising open-minded health professionals who are experts in their field. Members are knowledgeable about polio and its late effects and demonstrate the ability to think analytically and strategically in advising Polio Australia on clinical matters. The group composition represents health care professionals in diverse areas of specialisation (for example: immunisation, rehabilitation, physiotherapy, orthotics, psychology, research) and a balance of backgrounds (for example: geographic, cultural, gender).

In 2011, the CAG will start working together with Polio Australia to advise and provide expert input into Polio Australia's programs. They will be reviewing and approving information including a range of fact sheets for polio survivors, and agreeing on clinical practice guidelines for their fellow health professionals. Polio Australia is excited about this collaboration and feels privileged to be working with such an interested and experienced group.

Where there is Hope . . .

Thanks to generous support from people attending Victoria's Polio Day, \$265 was raised for children with polio in the Indian state of Bihar. Victorian Polio Survivor, Fran Henke, collected and sent the money which translated to 10,612,43 rupees to Hope Charity founder Sanjay Kumar who will use it to purchase plaster, timber for crutches and multi vitamins for the malnourished children. Fran asks any group considering holding raffles or fundraisers as part of their Christmas breakups to consider sending the proceeds that could make a huge difference to those kids. Visit the Hope Charity blog site [here](#).

L-R Polio Australia's Mary-ann Liethof, valued helper Gail Lynch and Fran Henke at the raffle stall on Polio Day



Outbreak in the Republic of Congo

The Republic of Congo is experiencing an explosive outbreak of wild poliovirus type 1 with a high proportion of fatalities. The first outbreak response activity took place from 12 November. Due to the large number of adult cases, all ages are being vaccinated. Read the [press release](#) and the current situation [here](#).

New vaccine promises polio eradication

Dramatic results for a new vaccine have raised hopes that polio can be eradicated around the world in the next three years. Dr Hamid Jafari runs India's National Polio Surveillance Unit and he says overcrowding and poor sanitation make it hard to conquer polio.



But World Health Organisation spokesman Dr Bruce Aylward says scientists are now more optimistic, with a WHO study showing a [new vaccine](#) has drastically reduced the number of new cases. Dr Aylward says the new drug is changing the game. "The last step has been elusive and with this new vaccine it seems that we're going to make this step in the near future", he said.

That could be as soon as two or three years' time, according to Dr Nigel Crawford from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute in Melbourne. He has written the commentary which has been published in The Lancet alongside the new study. He says eradication will require a final concerted effort and more funding. "So we really need to make sure countries like Australia, which are clearly lucky that we don't have endemic polio anymore, are actively supporting these programs to try and eradicate it as a worldwide disease."

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/10/26/3049014.htm>

European Polio Conference: PPS – A challenge of today

This conference will be held from Wednesday 31 August to Friday 2 September 2011 and hosted by the European Polio Union (EPU) and The Danish Society of Polio and Accident Victims (PTU).



After the great polio epidemics in the last century around 700,000 people in Europe are now suffering from the late effects of polio. Many survivors have a decreasing functional level because of paralysis, fatigue and pain, and this is a big challenge for polio survivors and the professionals who are treating them.

The European Polio Union conference intends to:

- ◆ give medical and social professionals a possibility to exchange new research results and to debate relevant topics on a professional level
- ◆ give polio survivors a possibility to achieve and exchange new knowledge on assessment, treatment and coping
- ◆ achieve awareness on polio issues in the health sector and social services

If you can see yourself in Copenhagen next year, check the [Conference website](#) for more details.

Linking to Polio Australia

As Polio Australia is still growing its profile, we appreciate every opportunity to be linked to other polio-related and other relevant websites. Check [here](#) to see who we have added to our 'Links' webpage so far and let us know if you can return the favour.

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