

Note from the General Manager

Hello everyone and welcome to another Newsflash! This is a very exciting time of the year. Firstly I would like to congratulate Sione Crawford who is our new Community Programs and Services Team Manager. Sione has been with NUAAs for several years working as a Peer Educator and more recently as our Policy and Advocacy Coordinator. I know that he will do a fantastic job.

Secondly, the annual International Conference on the Reduction of Drug Related Harm will be taking place in Liverpool from the 25th April. This is the 21st year of the conference and the theme is "Harm Reduction: The Next Generation". Always an important event that supports the meeting of drug user activists from across the world, this year will be no exception. NUAAs has been able to secure funding for both Sione and myself to attend. We are participating in a total of five sessions covering topics such as hepatitis C treatment and support, hepatitis C prevention, GLBT issues, pharmacotherapy diversion and partnerships. We hope to blog while we are away so keep an eye on the NUAAs website.

As we are heading into Autumn and the days are becoming shorter and cooler – make sure that you keep looking after yourself and your mates...

The Newsflash will be quarterly from July – see you then.

With lots of respect

Nicky Bath



Hep C Week in the Hunter

If you live in Newcastle or are up that way during Hep C Awareness Week 17th - 21st May, why not call into NUAAs office which is located within the ACON Building (129 Maitland Road, Islington) and check out the different activities planned for that week. While you're there, pick up a show bag full of free goodies and information about hep C.

Monday is "Game Day" so come down and challenge the NUAAs staff to a game of "Play the Hep C game" on a life-sized game board learn about hep C while having some fun.

Tuesday is when you can meet NUAAs Ethos Worker, Hope Everingham. Hope works at Newcastle Methadone clinic and she's there to support peers thinking about and/or undergoing hep C treatment. This is an opportunity to ask questions about hep C and treatment options.

Wednesday is Peerlinker Day. Interested in becoming involved in NUAAs as a peer educator? Want to speak to a peer educator and find out what they do? Or do you want to talk to someone about hep C who you can relate to? Then Wednesday is your day!

Thursday is Juice Day. Healthy diets are important if you have hep C so come down and try our healthy fresh fruit juices and pick up information about eating to keep your liver healthy.

Don't forget we have great showbags full of great giveaways everyday during Hep C Awareness Week!

There are a lot of great events planned for Hep C Awareness Week. Don't forget to check them out.

Lucy

Hep C Awareness week

May 17 - 21

Call NUAAs for details on how you can participate

Community Mobilisation Team

PeerLink

The third Hunter Refresher Training Session with the Hunter PeerLink group in early April. As usual there was plenty of interest and the group is keen to take part in activities during Hepatitis Awareness Week.

Also in the Hunter region a new 3-day Sustain and Recruit Training program is planned for May 5, 6 and 7. This will bring new recruits into the Hunter PeerLink family and help PeerLink's activities reach further into drug users' local networks.

A couple of North Coast PeerLink's key peers have just written an article for the latest *User's News*, which gives a great insight into the peer education work they do.

To support the good work of the peer educators, part of the work of the PeerLink Project is to liaise with representatives from local health services. To further those positive relationships the PeerLink Project Worker held a strategic partnership meeting in Coffs Harbour last year. As the Hunter Newcastle is an important region for PeerLink another strategic partnership meeting will be held in May in Newcastle. These relationships with services help support the peer educators in their work, as well as keeping services representatives up to speed with the project in order to support it.

Jeffrey Wegener

Lotus Group

Some members of the Lotus Group enjoyed a great day at the Sydney Easter Show. Cabramatta Community Centre donated the entry tickets and even organised for us to be driven there and back in a minivan. It was a beautiful, sunny day and we had fun watching the shows,

making friends with the animals and some of us were even brave enough to go on a ride. Thank you Cabramatta Community Centre for your support.

Lotus Group has been asked to play a key role in some of the activities that are planned for Hepatitis Awareness Week in May. This community event will take place in Liverpool Mall. A 3D chalk artist will transform a part of the mall by creating great visual artworks containing hepatitis messages. If you have a creative flair and like to draw or design things, or more generally want to be involved in raising awareness of hepatitis, then get in contact with NUAA.

Kha Hien

ETHOS Project

Here in Newcastle at the ETHOS Project we are soaring ahead with people joining in hepatitis treatment and support program. Hunter New England Health has even employed a new doctor to work specifically with us here on a Monday and Tuesday. This is a great start for anyone out there in the Newcastle area who is living with hep C.

Hope Everingham

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