

**9 August 2016**

## **Mobile health lab aims to reduce chronic disease during National Science Week**

An interactive mobile health laboratory will visit four Northern Territory (NT) communities between 15 and 20 August as part of National Science Week, to spark people's interest in science and health, and demonstrate how lifestyle choices can impact people's future health.

[Menzies School of Health Research](#)'s mobile [HealthLAB](#), uses the latest health technology to measure participants' health and inform them about the impacts of smoking, alcohol misuse and diet, which can increase the risk of major chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer, kidney disease, obesity and cardiovascular disease.

Associate Professor Heidi Smith-Vaughan, HealthLAB Director, said HealthLAB will engage and interact with people to show them how to make the right lifestyle choices to lower their risk of developing chronic diseases.

'By educating people about long term health implications, we aim to promote positive health behaviours and empower people to reduce the risks of developing health issues later in life for themselves and future generations', Associate Professor Smith-Vaughan said.

HealthLAB includes an alcohol station that simulates being intoxicated. Participants wear night goggles and navigate their way down a path with obstacles. The aim is to start a dialogue about the short and long term effects of alcohol on the body's organs.

HealthLAB, run by dietitians, sonographers, clinical professionals and scientists, aims to give participants, especially young people and school children, the confidence to look after their health and make positive lifestyle changes.

Due to a [National Science Week](#) grant, HealthLAB will visit Bathurst Island, Mataranka, Katherine and Batchelor during National Science Week 15-20 August.

Northern Territory Science Week Committee Chair, Jade Leask, said National Science Week aims to encourage an interest in science among the general public and encourage younger people to be fascinated by the world they live in.

'We are delighted to assist HealthLAB to travel to remote communities in the NT and allow more people to engage with the science of health', Ms Leask said.

HealthLAB will visit the following NT communities for National Science Week:

Monday 15 August 2016	10am-1pm	Batchelor Institute, Batchelor
Tuesday 16 August 2016	10am-2pm	Bitter Springs National Park, Mataranka
Wednesday 17 August 2016	9.30am-12.30pm	Katherine Shopping Centre, Katherine
Friday 20 August 2016		Xavier College, Bathurst Island

### **Media:**

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### **Menzies School of Health Research**

Menzies School of Health Research is Australia's leading medical research institute dedicated to improving Indigenous, global and tropical health. We have a 30-year history of scientific discovery

and public health achievement. Menzies works at the frontline, joining with partners across the Asia-Pacific as well as Indigenous communities across northern and central Australia. We collaborate to create new knowledge, grow local skills and find enduring solutions to problems that matter.