

Elcho Island community researchers bound for Alaska

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Three community-based researchers from Elcho Island working with Menzies School of Health Research (Menzies) are bound for Alaska tomorrow (Thursday, 3 August) to present at an international conference.

The researchers, who work with Menzies' Hepatitis B team, will be able to present at the World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Viral Hepatitis in Anchorage thanks to support from Airnorth, generous support from other persons and organisations, and through conference scholarships.

This trip will also mark the first time the three researchers from Galiwin'ku, Sarah Bukulatjpi, George Gurruwiwi and Roslyn Dhurrkay, will leave the country.

"This trip is important because it means our researchers will be able to share knowledge on how to treat hepatitis B, a disease that affects all remote Indigenous communities," said Paula Binks, hepatitis B program manager at Menzies.

"They will also be able to meet their peers and participate in cross-cultural experiences. It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for them."

The planning for this trip triggered a series of processes and events, including officially changing the names of the researchers, applying for passports, shopping for warm clothing, filming video abstracts for the conference, and applying for funding assistance.

"We are grateful for the support from Airnorth, who have provided in-kind support by way of return flights from Elcho Island to Darwin for passport interviews and en route to Alaska itself," said Ms Binks.

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Menzies School of Health Research

Menzies School of Health Research is one of Australia's leading medical research institutes dedicated to improving Indigenous, global and tropical health. Menzies has a history of over 30 years 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. Menzies collaborates to create new knowledge, grow local skills and find enduring solutions to problems that matter.

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World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Viral Hepatitis

www.wipcvh2017.org