

We recommend that:

- CPDs be mandated for all quad bikes.
- An Australian Design Rule be developed for quad bikes.
- A technical standard for CPDs be developed.
- New sales of child size quad bikes be stopped.
- Children under the age of 16 should not be allowed to ride quad bikes of any size and quad bikes should be designed so that this is not possible.
- Passengers should not be carried on quad bikes under any circumstance and that quad bikes should be designed so that this is not possible.
- The purchase cost of quad bikes must include appropriate safety equipment.
- The development of information on the selection of appropriate vehicles be undertaken and made available to farmers, pastoralists and rural industries.
- The development of information about the safety features and stability rating of quad bikes be made available to farmers, pastoralists and rural industries.

What needs to happen:

- All existing quad bikes should be fitted with an approved CPD
- All new quad bikes be fitted with an approved CPD by the manufacturer or at point of sale.
- Fast track the development of a technical standard for CPDs.
- Regulation of CPDs be accompanied by a rebate program funded by the manufacturers.
- When purchasing a quad bike, the cost of safety equipment should be included as part of the package.
- A campaign targeting parents to increase their understanding of the risks associated with quad bike use is required.

►► What happened?

Injury and fatality continue to occur. Anecdotally there is a shift away from quad bikes to side by side vehicles by some in the agricultural sector.

There has been aggressive marketing of child size quad bikes targeting not only rural families but remote communities.

I'm pleased to report that industry has responded with several prototypes of crush protection devices – these are not supported by manufacturers who have not changed their stance. Also helmet design for hot climates and tracking devices for isolated workers have featured in more localised responses.

One of the issues to consider is the evolution of the quad bike – in the 1980s these were 125cc now can be 900cc – bigger and much more powerful.

Quad bikes have their place – it's important that the rider or farmer assess the work required and match the vehicle for the job – horse, bike, side by side, quad etc. All riders of which ever vehicle require training and safety equipment. RANs have a big role in educating families and enterprises on this important public health issue.

Here are some useful links to information and ongoing work:

www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/quad-bikes

www.farmsafe.org.au

Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety (ACAHS or AgHealth) <http://sydney.edu.au/medicine/aghealth/index.php?id=5040>

Professor Sabina Knight
Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health
James Cook University ●

from elcho to alaska

It's a long way from Elcho Island to Alaska. As the crow flies, the two places are approximately 10,500 kilometres apart, separated by the North Pacific Ocean.

There are also vast differences in terms of climate and culture. However, there's one thing the two places have in common – incidences of viral hepatitis in Indigenous communities, and a desire to effectively manage it.

A team of community-based researchers from Elcho Island, supported by Menzies School of Health Research, made the long journey

to Anchorage from their home in Galiwin'ku to present at the World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Viral Hepatitis last month.

For the three Indigenous researchers – Sarah Bukulatjpi, George Gurruwiwi and Roslyn Dhurrkay – it was also their first time overseas.

"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, in the lead up to the trip. ►►



L-R: Melita McKinnon, Sarah Bukulatjpi, Roslyn Dhurrkay, George Gurruwiwi and Paula Binks.

▶▶ “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 the trip triggered a series of processes and events, including officially changing their names, applying for passports, shopping for warm clothing, filming video abstracts for the conference, and applying for funding assistance.

“This trip is important because it means our researchers will be able to share knowledge on how to treat hepatitis B...”

Sarah, an Aboriginal health practitioner specialising in the management of hepatitis B, said she was looking forward to traveling to

Alaska, despite the mix of emotions at the thought of being away from country for so long.

“We want to find out how they do hepatitis B research there,” she said.

“Hepatitis B is hard to explain in language; there are lots of medical terms. I talk about it in plain and simple language and use pictures to tell people where their liver is and explain how immunisation can help protect them.

“It’s important for me to be with the Yolnu people. I want to keep doing what I’m doing and help them; that is why I chose this job.”

The trip was made possible due in part to generous support from several persons and organisations, including Menzies School of Health Research, Hepatitis Australia and Airthort, who flew the researchers from Elcho Island to Darwin and back for passport interviews and the first leg of their long journey to Alaska. ●



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a matter of support



Menoring FNP students from Chicago at Saibai.

Talk to Doune Heppner for a few minutes and the word ‘support’ will crop up a few times. It’s a key necessity of life, she says, and it’s something she values as both a provider and a recipient.

Doune, a country girl from Western Victoria, who has spent the past 12 years working in communities in the Torres Strait, was drawn to community nursing from the start.

“I was hospital trained, as you were in those days,” she says, “and I always felt there was a bit more to life for the patients than being in hospital. ‘Why did they have to be in their pyjamas as soon as they were admitted?’, I used to think.”

But back then, “you just fell into community nursing, there was no clear pathway. Thankfully, there is a very established pathway now,” she says. ▶▶