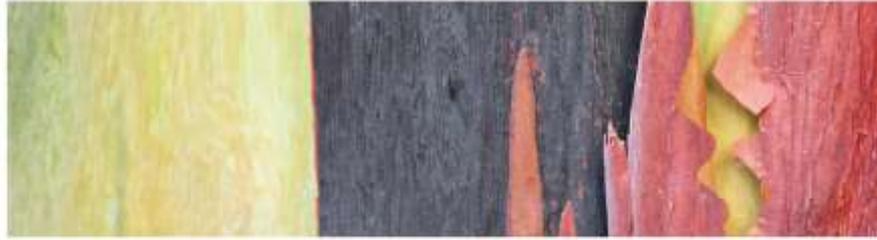




NATIONAL RURAL
HEALTH
ALLIANCE INC.



Good health and wellbeing in rural and remote Australia.

MEDIA RELEASE

13 October 2014

Connecting Mental Health and Anti-Poverty Weeks

Both poor mental health and poverty occur at slightly higher rates in country than city areas, and both phenomena have particular characteristics in rural and remote areas that need to be understood when seeking answers. The challenges are greater in rural and remote places.

Just as Mental Health Week and Anti-Poverty Week lie side-by-side, so do their issues. The World Health Organisation (WHO) reminds us that "an overwhelming majority of people with mental and psychosocial disabilities are living in poverty."¹ The NRHA is therefore keen to give the two formal Weeks some rural and remote focus.

On 16 October at 10.30 am AEDT there is a webcast that will showcase how arts can be used to reduce the effects of mental illness and poverty in a quite remote area. The webcast will in effect be a virtual tour of Barkly Regional Arts. It will feature discussions with members of the Winanjikari Music Centre, Artists of the Barkly, and Media Mob about how engagement with Barkly Regional Arts helped improve social cohesion and inclusion, two important determinants of mental health. The webcast will bring some national attention to the important role of community arts in remote and rural areas.

Produced collaboratively by Barkly Regional Arts in the Northern Territory and the NRHA, #exStreamheArt is an Anti-Poverty Week event that will be streamed live across Australia. It will showcase the benefits of participation in the arts in remote communities that often feel the burdens of poverty and mental illness.

Consistent evidence shows that engagement in the arts can help with a person's mental health state, not only through the inherent value of creating the art, but also through skills building and the development of social and economic capital².

The webcast will be accessible live to the public on mobile devices, computers and smart TVs across Australia. You will be able to view the webcast at anytime between 10.30 am AEDT to 12 pm AEDT or download on demand from either the NRHA or Barkly Regional Arts website after the event.

To view the live webcast visit ruralhealth.org.au/events/exstreamheart and follow the link to the live stream on the Barkly Regional Arts website where the live stream will begin automatically.

Visit the NRHA website for more details: ruralhealth.org.au/events/exstreamheart

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¹ http://www.who.int/mental_health/policy/development/en/

² <http://ruralhealth.org.au/sites/default/files/documents/nrha-policy-document/submissions/sub-mental-health-supplementary-21-may-2014.pdf>