Intersectoral Collaboration

PAPERS PRESENTED

- “Primary Health Care - Working Partnerships” - C Smith, Remote Area Nurse, East Kimberley Health Service, Wyndham, WA.


- “Rural Mental Health Care - Enabling Parallel Lines to Intersect” - J Gribble, Mid-North SARDGP; P Worley, Flinders University; L Hall, Mid-North SARDGP; S Mitchell, SA.

ISSUES IDENTIFIED

- Community development activities by indigenous communities are being jeopardised by policies which produce major disparities in their access to housing, power, water, sewerage and Shire environmental services compared to non-indigenous communities of comparable size.

- Community development plans should reflect the needs and desires of each community and so all Government and non-government agencies should co-ordinate and collaborate to implement these plans in equal partnership with the communities.

- In many cases, communities are precluded from accessing technology on services because of cost factors. This barrier of cost can be reduced in varying degrees if agencies developed joint venture arrangements, shared facilities and overheads and collaborated in the development of innovative schemes which best meet needs by cutting across rigid program and agency administrative practices.

- Telemedicine, which in its simplest definition is the use of technology to enable interaction between a patient and their doctor when both are in different locations, is possible in most settings today by applying current, off the shelf, technologies.

- The major factors underlying the increased use of telemedicine are the:
  - increasing availability of telecommunications infrastructure;
  - difficulty in attracting and retaining doctors in rural areas;
  - spiralling costs of delivering health care;
  - need to increase access to care of people who are under-served;
- widespread availability and reliability of video-conferencing equipment; and
- removal of legislative barriers.

- It takes two to three years to understand and integrate new technology into all areas of work practice.

- Technology can be used to improve rural mental health services with collaboration between consumers, government, rural and urban health professionals.