

RURAL HEALTH WEEK

"Health, Climate Change and Sustainability: Developing Positive Rural Responses"

This year's Rural Health Week brings together three vital and inter-related issues. Ensuring equitable health provision in rural areas may require additional resources but this provision has to be sustainable and also take account of environmental issues. So this is not just a question of (limited) financial resources but of how we use people and services, how we set up systems that can continue to enable people to access health care, and how we respond to the exigencies of climate change.

Rather than a reactive response to these demands there may be the opportunity to develop strategies that respond positively to all three agendas. So for example the use of health professionals to take services out to remote and rural patients will reduce health journeys and increase access for patients without their own transport; the development of telehealth delivery and conferencing systems, which had not till recently reflected the initial enthusiasm and promise, may be given new impetus; and input from the voluntary sector to help tackle local provision could be given higher status and value.

During Rural Health Week 2010, 19th to 25th September, there is the opportunity for local groups and organisations to promote themselves by adopting variations on this theme. You could use the week to launch a new aspect of your work; run an information day bringing together speakers on the different aspects with a joint discussion afterwards; organise an exhibition making the links between the issues.

The IRH can help you by:

- * advertising your event on our Rural Health Week web page
- * providing advice on targeting your local press or drafting articles
- * sharing what others are doing from the Rural Health Week Events page

And you can help promote the week by:

- * sending a message of support for the week to the Rural Health Week web page. Every entry helps to broaden the impact of the week and endorse the message.
- * advertising Rural Health Week on your web site
- * highlighting your priority rural health issue on the Rural Health Week web page

To find out more or to submit details of your activities for Rural Health Week please contact:

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