

Indigenous News Flash ARCHIVE: JULY 2009



News:

"Aborigines in West Australia's Pilbara iron ore region are taking on BHP Billiton over its claim for leases covering 200 square kilometres of their tribal country."

For more information: <http://www.theage.com.au/national/lore-of-the-land-as-aborigines-take-on-bhp-20090802-e5vw.html?page=-1>

This looks like a great new website: <http://indigenouspeoplesissues.com/>

New Recommended References:

1. Ganesharajah, C (2009) Indigenous health and wellbeing: the importance of Country. Native Title Research Report, Report No. 1/2009. Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra.
2. Huang, H, Chen, B. Yang, C, Zhu, H. (2008) Indigenous knowledge and culture on natural resources management in the Salween canyon, Yunnan Province, China. International Journal of Risk Assessment and Management, Vol. 8, No. 4, pp. 395-411.

Education Centre:

Reviews in The Lancet on "Determinants, diseases patterns and inequality in Indigenous Health"
By Coll Hutchison

Indigenous peoples are amongst the most marginalized peoples in the world, as their profile of extreme poor health in almost every context where they live demonstrates (Stephens *et al*, 2006, WHO, 2007). A recent publication in *The Lancet* by Gracey *et al* discusses the medical reality of determinants and disease patterns in Indigenous populations, stating that: 'The basic causes of illness are similar in Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. But the burden of disease, disability, and death is consistently greater in Indigenous than in non-Indigenous people'. King and colleagues then follow this up with an attempt to deconstruct the underlying reasons for these disparities. They then go on to discuss the importance of promoting "more culturally appropriate ways to interact with, to assess, and to treat Indigenous peoples" among clinicians who work with Indigenous health. This point builds on Yotti's article in May which emphasized the importance of understanding "difference in values and culture" for research purposes and that this cross/ inter-cultural understanding shouldn't just be limited to research, but is also necessary during the implementation and practice of the knowledge gained from it.

By recognizing and respecting Indigenous perspectives on health and wellbeing, and by working with Indigenous groups instead of on them, a proactive dialogue may be co-created to reverse the dire position that many populations experience worldwide. Furthermore, it is necessary to acknowledge that although "Indigenous peoples" may share many common traits and circumstances, in reality they are a highly diverse group and care should be taken to respect them as such as well. The two articles discussed above provide comprehensive summaries on Indigenous-related health issues, but simultaneously highlight the lack of coverage of Indigenous health in Latin America, Asia and Africa on an international level.

Featured Articles

Gracey M, King M. (2009) Indigenous health part 1: determinants and disease patterns. *The Lancet*, 374:65-75.

King M, Smith A, Gracey M. (2009) Indigenous health part 2: the underlying causes of the health gap. *The Lancet*, 374:76-85.

Additional references

Montenegro, R.A. and C. Stephens. (2006) Indigenous health in Latin America and the Caribbean. *The Lancet*, 367(9525): p. 1859-69.

Nettleton, C., C. Stephens, and F. Bristow. (2007) Utz Wachil: a study of indigenous perceptions of health and environment in five countries. *Ecohealth*, 4(4): p. 461-772.

Ohenjo N, Willis R, Jackson D, Nettleton C, Good K, Mugarura B. (2006) Health of Indigenous people in Africa. *The Lancet*, 367(9526):1937-46.

Anderson I, Crengle S, Kamaka ML, Chen TH, Palafox N, Jackson-Pulver L. (2006) Indigenous health in Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific. *The Lancet*, 367(9524):1775-85.

Stephens, C., et al. (2006) Disappearing, displaced, and undervalued: a call to action for Indigenous health worldwide. *The Lancet*, 367(9527): p. 2019-28.

World Health Organisation. (2007) (CSDOH), Achieving Health Equity: from root causes to fair outcomes: Commission on Social Determinants of Health interim statement WHO, Editor: World Health Organisation, Commission on Social Determinants of Health: Geneva.