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Outstanding GPs and health workers recognised

Frontline health workers helping their communities battle cancer, chronic disease and mental illness have been recognised in the 2011 HESTA Primary Health Care Awards.

Fifteen national health leaders have been named finalists across three categories in the \$30,000 awards program run in partnership with the Australian General Practice Network (AGPN).

The Awards acknowledge outstanding contributions by Young Leaders, Team Excellence and Individual Distinction. AGPN and HESTA are proud to announce the 2011 finalists:

Individual Distinction Category:

- **Dr I-Hao Cheng**, a GP working in one of Victoria's most disadvantaged areas who has dedicated his career to delivering high quality, culturally appropriate primary care to refugees
- **Dr Vivienne Tedeschi**, for her work at the Giingnan Durranday Marlaanggu (Happy Healing Hands) integrated clinic at the Bowraville mission in NSW
- **Dr Julie Thompson** from Warragul Victoria for helping to transform healthcare for mentally ill Australians, and changing the way many GPs care for breast and ovarian cancer patients
- **Simon Ruth**, Peninsula Health Director of Community Health Complex Services - the alcohol and drug expert who founded Australia's first alcohol treatment program targeting adults aged over 60
- **Dr Dale Ford** from Hamilton, Victoria, for his commitment to delivering high quality chronic disease care, rural workforce development and disaster support for rural patients.

Team Excellence Category:

- **Close The Gap and the BE PROUD card (Toowoomba, QLD)** – Michelle Kudell and her team at GP Connections Toowoomba for their work improving access to mainstream medical care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- **Australian College of Optometry Outreach Programs (Carlton, VIC)** – Piers Carozzi and his team for outreach programs providing eye care and glasses to homeless and disadvantaged communities
- **Toowoomba Diabetes Specialist Service Centre (Toowoomba QLD)** – CEO Tim Wilke and his team for coordinating diabetes services, reducing hospital demand and improving GP education
- **Purple House (Alice Springs, NT)** – Sarah Brown and Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku for innovative holistic care for Aboriginal patients with end stage renal failure
- **Community Kitchens (Frankston, VIC)** - the Peninsula Health team for their work bringing isolated and disadvantaged people together to cook and share healthy meals, which is now a national project.

Young Leader Category:

- **Jonathan Ford**, Aboriginal Health Services Manager, for his critical role setting up the Mooditj Koort ('Good Heart' in Noongar language) health service in Kwinana WA
- **Dr Abhi Varshney**, Founder of the Man in the Mirror foundation, corporate health adviser and care provider during the Queensland floods
- **Terry Tierney**, inspirational teenage member of the Youth National Reference Group at mental health organisation headspace in Melbourne, Victoria

- **Megan Somerville** for her work establishing Geelong clinic Kardinia Health, and sharing her learnings on corporate governance, design, planning and construction nationally, and
- **Joanne Turner**, NSW-based Accredited Practising Dietitian and Exercise Physiologist who is taking her lifestyle message to the community as a media commentator and public speaker.

National finalists will be flown to Melbourne for the AGPN National Forum and the gala HESTA Primary Health Care Awards dinner on 16 November. Each winner will receive \$5,000 in an ME Bank Online Savings Account and \$5,000 towards further education or implementation of their program or initiative. To find out more about the awards visit www.phcawards.com or to purchase tickets visit <http://www.gpnetworkforum.com.au/forum-program-2011/social-functions>

AGPN National Forum program: <http://www.gpnetworkforum.com.au/forum-program-2011>

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