

9 June 2008

## The boys line up for Men's Health Week 2008

During Men's Health Week 08 men are being encouraged to look out for their mate's and their own overall health.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 2004 men were four times more likely than women to take their own lives.

Being launched during the week is a community service announcement (CSA) targeting rural men starring Aussie music legends **Lee Kernaghan, Angry Anderson** and national broadcaster **Charles Wooley**. The CSA promotes the importance of talking to your family, friends and GP.

Australasian Men's Health Forum President and University of Western Sydney Professor, John Macdonald said sometimes people underestimate the important role communication plays in a person's health and well being.

"Men aren't always as good as women at communicating how they feel.

"This week is a great opportunity to check in with your male friends and see how they are.

"It's about a positive prescription for good health: catching up with your mates and swapping stories about your week or getting involved in the local community and sporting clubs," Professor Macdonald said.

One in six men will experience depression in their lives, and one in eight men will experience an anxiety disorder in any one year.

Australian General Practice Network Chair Dr Tony Hobbs said social isolation and relationship problems contribute to depression. Withdrawing from family and friends is a common symptom.

"Men often respond differently to depression than women, being more likely to describe physical symptoms like tiredness or losing weight than explaining how they feel.

"GPs are well trained to diagnose and treat conditions related to depression and anxiety.

"The good news is that there is help available. If you or a friend or family member is having troubles your local GP can help," Dr Hobbs said.

For free confidential advice please call **beyondblue 1300 22 46 36**

**To organise a media interview with Dr Hobbs please call Kathryn Conroy on 0416 428 678**