

**EVENT NAME:** The Australian General Practice Network (AGPN) Forum 2008

**DATE:** 30 October - 2 November 2008

**TOTAL ATTENDANCE:** 600 participants including 50 exhibitors

**ORGANISING COMMITTEE:** Trisha Wong, AGPN Events Manager

### OBJECTIVE OF CONFERENCE:

The Australian General Practice Network (AGPN) Forum attracted close to 1,000 participants representing more than 250 organisations to Australia's newest convention location, the tropical harbour city of Darwin in November.

The AGPN Forum aims to encourage the promotion and adoption of best practice in primary health care delivery through the Divisions of General Practice Network, a total of 111 divisions, by continually delivering a high quality program across a range of topics relating to primary health care.

AGPN specialise in clinical and policy issues relating to general practice in Australia. More than 90 per cent of General Practitioners (GP's) and an increasing number of practice nurses and allied health professionals are Members of their local Division.

"By delivering local health solutions through general practice, the aim is to ensure all Australians can access a high quality health system," said AGPN CEO Mr David Butt.

"We have a special interest in primary health care services, particularly in the areas of mental health, immunisation, practice nursing, Indigenous health, workforce issues, information management, aged and palliative care, chronic diseases (diabetes, heart disease) and quality use of medicines," added Butt.

### DESTINATION SELECTION RATIONALE:

"Darwin was an obvious choice to expose the latest research, techniques, development and education in areas of indigenous health, diabetes and tropical medicine amongst others," stated AGPN's CEO, David Butt.

The four day conference was held at the Darwin Convention Centre attracted national media attention with the key note addresses from the Federal Minister of Health, Nicola Roxon and Opposition Minister of Health Peter Dutton plus industry experts.

Four parallel sessions on the fields of Chronic Disease Management, Aged and Palliative Care, Primary Mental Health Care and Quality Use of Medicine were also held.



### THE DARWIN CONVENTION CENTRE EXPERIENCE:

The conference was supported with a trade exhibition for 56 companies plus high profile sponsors including Telstra, BUPA, GlaxoSmithKline, Guild, IPN, CSL Biotherapies MBF, Medicare to name but a few.

Local company, Fusion Designs were contracted as exhibition supplier for all booth design, custom builds and individual exhibitor requirements, as well as the complete event management and decoration of the gala conference dinner for 780 guests.

AGPN Events Manager, Ms Trisha Wong said the Darwin Convention Centre were very professional and helpful and all requests for assistance were met with minimum fuss and always in a friendly manner.

“As the Darwin Convention Centre is surrounded by one of Australia’s largest harbours and the Arafura Sea, it only seemed fitting the theme for the gala dinner was Pirates of the Arafura,” Wong continued.

The Exhibition Hall was completely decked out with pirate paraphernalia including a life-size pirate ship and energetic entertainment to get the group into party mode, all organised by Fusion Designs.

“Everyone really got into the Pirate theme and everyone enjoyed the evening, not least of all because of the high quality catering and the friendly can-do attitude of the staff. We received a number of positive comments about the food during the Forum, the Darwin Convention Centre chef’s did an excellent job,” added Ms Wong.



### THE NORTHERN TERRITORY EXPERIENCE:

Deputy CEO Ms Liesel Wett said the beauty of holding their event in the Northern Territory, was working with support of the local NT division members, to develop a constructive conference that had an interesting and varied social networking program.

“Our original target was 600 delegates, but the flexibility of the Convention Centre allowed us to accommodate larger numbers. We had almost a thousand attendees and more exhibitors than the previous year,” remarked Ms Wett.

The social program was well supported with the welcome reception a hit at the Darwin’s famous Mindil Beach Sunset Markets. An informal evening allowing delegates the opportunity to network with other delegates while enjoying light cocktail food and beverages in a private sectioned off area taking full advantage of the sunset and water-views.

Delegates took the opportunity to sample some of the local cuisine for sale at one of the 60 food stalls featuring cuisine from the Mediterranean, Middle East, South America, North Africa, India and all over Southeast Asia. More shopping was done at the other 200 plus stalls offering arts, craft, tarot reading and massage.

### THE NORTHERN TERRITORY EXPERIENCE continued:

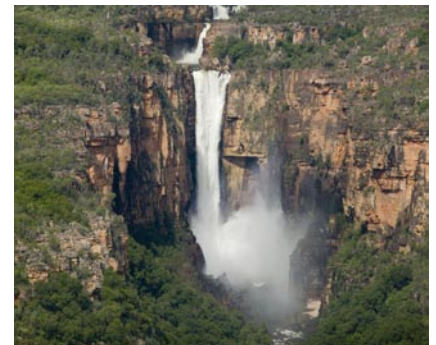
The highlight of the evening was a spectacular fireworks display commemorating the last markets of the season. Networking dinners were held at some of Darwin's finest restaurants including Hanuman Restaurant, the sumptuous flavours of Moorish Café and the ever popular Monsoons Café.

A social networking venue was set up at Lewinsky's located on Darwin's popular restaurant and night club hub, Mitchell Street. The ideal location to wind down after a full day of conference sessions.

### PRE & POST CONFERENCE TOURS:

Prior to the conference an overnight eHealthNT study tour was undertaken in Katherine, that proved to be a sell-out option.

Almost half of the participants were from the southern states of Victoria and New South Wales and many brought their families to add a holiday on to the conference activities and took the opportunity to explore the world heritage national parks, wildlife parks and many historic locations Darwin and the Northern Territory has to offer.



### CLIENT QUOTES:

*"Darwin was an obvious choice to expose the latest research, techniques, development and education in areas of indigenous health, diabetes and tropical medicine amongst others."*

**Mr David Butt, CEO Australian General Practice Network (AGPN)**

*"The beauty of holding our event in the Northern Territory, with the support of the local NT division members, we really did come up with a constructive conference with an interesting and varied social networking program."*

**Ms Liesel Wett, Deputy CEO Australian General Practice Network (AGPN)**

*"The Darwin Convention Centre were very professional and helpful. Our requests for assistance were met with minimum fuss and always in a friendly manner."*

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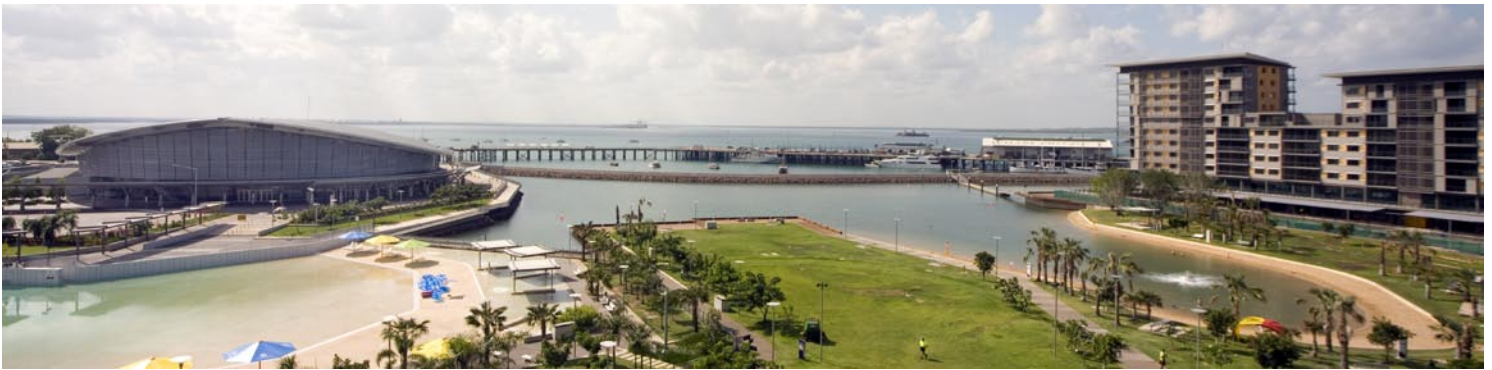
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