



## Aboriginal health worker resource kit released

18 March 2010

The 'Start Stronger, Live Longer' resource kit for Aboriginal health workers is being rolled out in a metropolitan and three regional locations ahead of a state-wide launch in June.

Aboriginal health workers in Kwinana, Derby, Port Hedland and Roebourne will be the first to see the new resource manual developed by the Kulunga Research Network, on behalf of the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research and its partner Rio Tinto.

Kulunga carried out research for 18 months at these locations before compiling the resource kit according to the needs of health workers. It includes information about adolescent health, infant child development, mental health, drugs, nutrition and health promotion.

Telethon Institute Director Professor Fiona Stanley said there was an urgent need to increase numbers of Aboriginal health workers and build on their skills in child health.

"The aim of the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Health Partnership is to improve the health of Aboriginal children, starting with pregnant mums. Aboriginal health workers have told us that one of the most effective ways to achieve this is by addressing their training and workforce development needs to ensure they feel empowered, capable and confident," Professor Stanley said.

"We must remember that Aboriginal health workers are at the forefront of health services in many Aboriginal communities and are faced with a wide range of health issues. This comprehensive reference and training manual has been designed to provide practical assistance, especially in regional locations where there may be less professional development and fewer senior colleagues."

The 'Start Stronger, Live Longer' resource is one of many initiatives the partnership supports to build the capacity of Aboriginal Health workers to ensure sustained improvements in the health of all Aboriginal people.

Rio Tinto's iron ore chief executive Sam Walsh said Rio Tinto's seven year partnership with the Telethon Institute was part of a commitment to strong and vibrant communities.

"We have large and small communities around our iron ore, salt and diamond operations, many of which are predominantly Aboriginal. Ensuring the long-term health of these communities is an important collaborative focus for us," Mr Walsh said.

The 'Start Stronger, Live Longer' resource kit will be presented on:

March 18	Kimberly Aboriginal Healthworker Conference, Derby	1.30pm – 4pm.
March 22	Kwinana Recquatic Centre	12pm - 4pm
March 25	Mawarnkarra Health Service, Roebourne	10.30am – 2.45pm
March 26:	Lotteries House, South Hedland	10.30am – 2.45pm

To attend one of these sessions or to request photographs and interviews please contact:

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