

Rio Tinto Coal Australia Pty Limited
GPO Box 391
Brisbane Queensland 4001
Australia
T +61 (0)7 3361 4200
F +61 (0)7 3361 4370

Press release

Emerald community gets active on men's health

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A local community network with a special interest in men's health is launching a seminar to inform and educate Emerald's community about male health issues in the region.

The Central Queensland Rural Division of General Practice (CQRDGP) with the support of Anglicare, Emerald Rotary Sunrise, the Central Highlands Regional Council, and a number of local businesses is launching the *Inaugural Dinner – Night for Knights* open to men and women in Emerald on 16 July 2010.

Rio Tinto Coal Australia's Kestrel Mine Community Development Fund is contributing \$6500 to the initiative, which aims to inform the community about men's health issues and uncover what locals perceive as the most critical health issues for men in the region.

The seminar is being presented by leading health expert Dr Toby Ford who is the founder of national corporate health provider, Ford Health Group.

Dr Ford also has extensive medical experience with coal mine workers in central Queensland.

CQRDGP vice president Dr Michael Belonogoff said the seminar is part of a larger initiative to educate and encourage men to start improving their lifestyle, wellbeing, and health.

"Many men in Australia are overweight and have, or are at risk, of developing Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, certain cancers, sleep apnoea, osteoarthritis, psychological disorders, and social problems," Dr Belonogoff said.

"It is our intention that this event will stimulate enough discussion and interest that members of our community will want to form a local peer network group on men's health.

"Eventually we hope this group will form an independent steering committee that will have the capacity to develop future events and programmes about men's health for the region."

Kestrel Mine general manager operations Tony Lennox said the evening provides the opportunity for men in the region to reflect on their health and make it a priority in their lives.

"We support initiatives like this that invest in enhancing the quality of life for people living within Emerald and its surrounding district," Mr Lennox said.

"This initiative will foster the skills of the local community and build their capacity so that eventually individuals can work together to coordinate sustainable men's health programmes and events for the entire community.

"It will also have flow-on effects to our younger generation. Fathers that lead by example and have a good attitude towards healthy living will have a positive impact on their family's health and wellbeing."

The evening is being held on 16 July from 7pm at the Capricornia Restaurant, Emerald. For more information or to book, please contact Paula Gordon on (07) 4982 4233 or email paula.gordon@cqrdgp.com.au.

Media Enquiries: Naomi Jamieson 07 3361 4347 / 0457 824 672.