



australian nursing federation

Promoting the Health of Australians: Case studies of achievements in improving the health of the population

The Australian Nursing Federation (ANF) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the currency and relevance of this monograph. I apologise for the delay in our response.

The monograph *Promoting the Health of Australians: Case studies of achievements in improving the health of the population* (1997) contains an important distillation of the progress and achievements of six major public health strategies and programs. Each of these is of continuing interest to the Australian community as they still pose serious health threats to our society in 2004.

It is the view of the ANF that a document such as this, now more likely to be primarily web based, fulfils a significant role for: educational and research purposes; the review and development of social and health policy; and in enabling the community and health system to assess the outcomes and benefits of the substantial resource investment that is made in each of the areas. Its value will be enhanced if there is a follow-up report on the progress in the five years since its publication.

This monograph may be a useful model to develop a series over time compiling accounts of the progress of these and other significant public health campaigns. There have certainly been other issues that have emerged since the publication of this document such as the SARS outbreak and obesity in Australian children among others. However, ensuring continuity of programs is important, and longer-term studies of effectiveness and value have not always been a feature of health policy and programs of the past. While each of these public health programs remains important, there are many others that could be reported on in a compilation such as this.

The use of different media to provide information is not necessarily a draw back and even if individual projects may be reported in annual reports, journals, on the organisation's home page and by other means, each has its own utility and the capacity to meet the multiple needs of different national and international audiences.

Monographs such as these are kept in the ANF's library and are available to staff and members, many of whom are: studying, involved in the development of local and regional policy; or are directly involved in the provision of health promotion activities and nursing care in the areas that are reported on in the Monograph and in others. We are aware also of the use of such documents in university libraries, health department and health service libraries as well as being accessed directly from the NH&MRC's web page. We would also hope that they are available to the broader community through public community libraries. The NH&MRC web page is a well known and well utilised site for many who work in the health system and is relied on for having high quality archived material as well as relevant current information.