

# Melioidosis in north Queensland

The Tropical Public Health Unit, Queensland Health has received reports of 11 cases of melioidosis in north Queensland from 1 January to 13 March, 1998. This is about twice as many cases as would be expected based on reports from previous years. Three of the cases have been fatal. Four of the 11 cases were in individuals aged less than 30 years (range 15 to 73 years). Two cases did not have any recognised risk factors for infection.

Geographically, cases have been reported in the area extending from Charters Towers in the south up to the Torres Strait.

Many areas of north Queensland have experienced heavy rainfall in the first few months of 1998. Flooding has occurred in several regions. This has most likely contributed to the observed increase in the number of cases of melioidosis so far this year.

# Gonococcal conjunctivitis outbreak

As of 17th March 1998, 13 confirmed cases of non-sexually transmitted gonococcal conjunctivitis in the Northern Territory and Western Australia have been notified to the Centre for Disease Control, Darwin and the Public Health Unit, Boulder, Western Australia. Twelve cases occurred in the Katherine district of the Northern

Territory and one in the central Australian region of Western Australia. Katherine communities were affected in January and the central Australian case occurred in February. The gonococcal conjunctivitis management protocol was instigated as a matter of urgency in both areas. No further cases have been identified since the alerts were issued.

## Notice to readers

### First announcement of conference

#### *Call for abstracts*

## ***Control of Communicable Diseases in Australia***

under the auspices of the Communicable Diseases Network of Australia New Zealand (CDNANZ)

### **10 November 1998, Canberra**

Control of communicable diseases continues to be one of the highest public health priorities both nationally and internationally. Emerging and re-emerging microbial threats and drug resistance pose an ever increasing challenge for public health practitioners. Added to this challenge are high public expectations of protection from public health hazards, increasing scrutiny from the media, lawyers, and politicians.

This conference will study public health communicable disease control issues and examine investigations of recent disease outbreaks in Australia.

This conference is for anyone working in the field of public health or communicable diseases: officers of local, State/Territory and Commonwealth health departments; health practitioners involved in communicable diseases and infection control; epidemiologists; microbiologists; infectious disease physicians; environmental health officers and public health officers.

For abstract submission, registration forms and further information please contact:

Miss Alison Milton  
National Centre for Disease Control, MDP 6  
Department of Health and Family Services  
GPO Box 9848  
Canberra ACT 2601

Phone (02) 62898245  
Fax (02) 62897791  
email [ccd.conf@health.gov.au](mailto:ccd.conf@health.gov.au)