

16 November 2009

## GPs Dinner 12 November 2009

General practitioners from Rockingham and Kwinana met with Kwinana industry representatives for their sixth annual dinner recently. Doctors from the Rockingham Kwinana Division of General Practice (RKDGP) and members from Kwinana Industries Council meet annually to discuss matters of community and worker health and wellbeing, and to share their knowledge.

Topics have been wide ranging over the years, said Chris Oughton, Director of the KIC. "On the one side, GP's find it a valuable experience to understand the industry perspective, and equally, industry can learn what the GPs can do for their workers in terms of programs and getting back to work after for example a soft tissue injury".

This year's themes were about chronic kidney disease, the silent ailment that often goes undetected until it is too late, leaving dialysis the only option other than a transplant. Anne Wilson, from Kidney Health Australia spoke about screening opportunities for the workers from KIC member companies. "Kidney disease is very prevalent in today's society, and many people don't even know they have a problem", she said.

The second speaker was Dr. Matt Atkins, who spoke about the infectious diseases people travelling to other parts of the world can pick up, and the precautions to take. He said that many of the KIC member companies would have their workers travelling all over the world for business purposes. This means that those workers are essentially taking their work places with them. Employers have a duty to ensure that workplaces are safe, which equally applies to ensuring that travelling employees get their vaccinations, know what situations to avoid and to know what symptoms to look for.

The annual GP dinners are a part of the KIC's Community Health Committee agenda.

The idea of these dinners is to give you an opportunity outside of your busy day schedules to get together - industry members and health practitioners - to build relationships, share knowledge and acquire new information, so that relationships are developed to assist with our common goal of improving the health and well being of the Rockingham and Kwinana communities; and of course this region includes many of industry's employees.

One of several specialist committees operating under KIC, the Community Health Committee seeks to identify and mitigate risks to community health arising from member operations, as well as seeking to improve the general level of community health in the Kwinana-Rockingham region.

"To further its work, the Committee sponsors two programs for local youth, and these are both run by RKDGP. One program provides specialist GP consultations and the other psychological consultations. It is good to hear that the programs are achieving good results for the community" said Mr. Oughton.

Photograph (from left) Peter Cook, CEO RKDGP, Dr Andrew Png, Chair RKDGP, Rod Lukatelich, Chair KIC's Community Health Committee, Chris Oughton, Director KIC.