

LifeLab encourages Darwinites to live healthier lives

Thursday, 14 August 2014

An opportunity for Darwinites to conduct and write their own health report cards is set to attract hundreds of participants to an exciting new initiative being launched by the Menzies School of Health Research (Menzies).

Held as part of National Science Week 2014 (16-24 August), LifeLab is a mobile science outreach program where participants have the opportunity to take on the role of scientist, conduct their own health tests and find out what the results mean for their general wellbeing.

Head of Menzies' Child Health Laboratory Research, Dr Heidi Smith-Vaughan said LifeLab was a fantastic opportunity to educate people of all ages to take ownership of their own health.

"We hope to increase people's understanding of their own health and help them develop their own health profile through self-assessment using state-of-the-art health technologies," Dr Smith-Vaughan said.

"Our Gap Year trainee, Rebecca Cass has been the driving force behind this Science Week initiative."

Rebecca said a major focus was to educate youth and the wider community on lifestyle strategies to reduce disease.

"We hope to change community attitudes and behaviour towards their own health through a hands-on, science-oriented teaching package," Rebecca said.

"Leading Menzies researchers will be on-hand to provide guidance on tests and hopefully inspire students to consider a career in science and health research."

Participants will be able to conduct a comprehensive health check including bioimpedance analysis, blood pressure, testing for anaemia, ear health test and grip strength.

In addition to having a mobile unit at the Nightcliff Markets (17 August), a LifeLab team will also set up at the Karama Shopping Centre (22 August) and during Charles Darwin University's Open Day (24 August).

Menzies hopes to have a permanent LifeLab constructed for the Darwin and Palmerston community which would also support a mobile unit to visit regularly Top End towns, communities and schools.

For more information on LifeLab, including the full National Science Week calendar of events, visit www.menzies.edu.au/LifeLab

Media contact:

Lucy Barnard, Senior Media and Events Officer 08 8946 8679; 0439 393 900
communications@menzies.edu.au

Menzies Background

Menzies School of Health Research is Australia's only Medical Research Institute dedicated to improving Indigenous health and wellbeing. We have a 28-year history of scientific discovery and public health achievement. Menzies works at the frontline, partnering with over 60 Indigenous

communities across Northern and Central Australia. We collaborate to create resources, grow local skills and find enduring solutions to problems that matter.