



### **Issue: Full Moon Calendars**

**Raised by:** Alison Males, Public Health Nurse, Rheumatic Heart Disease(RHD) program

**Background:** A proposal involving use of full moon dates, to act as a prompt for RHD clients to remember when prophylaxis is due. The concept has been used by some remote practitioners quite successfully in the past year.

RHD program staff have prepared a set of 'calendars' which can be used to assist implementation, including:

- flyer with date of full moon (e.g. for use on health centre notice board to advertise a RHD clinic day)
- yearly calendar (showing full year's full moon dates)
- credit card sized laminated calendar (double sided with information on dates and RHD clinic details)



Example of flyer for use to advertise RHD clinic  
(N.B. other forms follow a similar style)

**Discussion:** The concept of using the event of each full moon as a prompt for RHD clients to recall the timing of 28 day dosing of prophylactic penicillin appears an excellent idea. Particularly so, with regard to Remote Health's client group that may not actively use conventional calendars. (There appears potential for using this concept with other recall events of a monthly interval)

The concept combines opportunity for increased client self management and some structuring of the health centre routine. Potentially, a health centre might benefit from assigning the RHD portfolio to a RAN/AHW where the week of a full moon is used to concentrate on RHD client follow-up; possibly in larger sites dedicating the actual day of the full moon to hold a RHD clinic.

The concept is strongly recommended, but it appears appropriate to **not** mandate the use of full moon calendars. It is recommended primarily as a strategy to enhance compliance with the fundamentally important health provision service of penicillin prophylaxis. This strategy may be more effective in certain communities more than others. The inherent difficulties in maintaining consistent cover and the good efforts of staff are recognised, but compliance rates are still lower than is safe for this client group, and hence attention to strategies to increase compliance warrant serious consideration by all Remote staff.

No literature appears to exist on the use of full moon calendars. The model may well be worth formal review over a period of consistent use.

**Consultation:** NT RHD Advisory Comm. - Alison Males (Public Health Nurse CA), Eleanor Hooke (Public Health Nurse CA), Maureen Egan (Public Health Nurse TE), Andrew White (Paediatrician, CA) Alex Brown (Menzies School of Research CA), Rosalie Schultz (Public Health Physician CA), Deanna Habib (Public Health Nurse CAAC CA), Keith Edwards (Paediatrician, TE), Kay McGough (RHD register administrator TE), Kelly Phillips (RHD register administrator CA).

**References:** Nil

**Outcome:** Use of the Full Moon calendar concept is recommended, but not mandated.

RHD program will circulate template documents that will assist health centres opting to implement this concept. Questions and discussion are best directed to the RHD nursing staff (TE 8922 7932 or CA 8951 6909)