



**UNIVERSITY CENTRE  
FOR RURAL HEALTH**  
NORTH COAST  
*education research workforce*

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Wednesday 12 July 17**

# **International expert on flood recovery visits Lismore and Murwillumbah**

**Photo/filming Opportunity:  
Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July – 1.00pm  
Arts Recovery Community Hub  
(Shop 19 Carrington St Lismore)**

**Or**

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July – 2pm  
Public Forum – Flood: Promoting Recovery, Preparedness and Wellbeing  
UCRH, 61 Uralba St Lismore**

The flood of April 2017 will long live in the memories of the Northern Rivers community because of its size and how quickly the water came into homes and businesses in areas across the region.

Floods can have a major impact on the health and wellbeing of people of all ages. The stress caused by flooding can be long-lasting. The University Centre for Rural Health (UCRH) is working with a number of local organisations, including Lismore City Council and the Salvation Army, and community members to investigate the impact the April flood had on the health and wellbeing of people in our region. This information will help with planning to prepare for future floods. It will also inform health and social support services about current need within the community.

Professor Virginia Murray is an international expert in public health and disaster risk. She has served as a Consultant in Global Disaster Risk Reduction for Public Health England and has been closely involved in flood recovery work in Europe. Her work has been important in defining how living through flooding of a home or loss of livelihood can have a profound impact on the well-being of individuals and communities and how these effects may persist for months or even years after a flood incident.

Professor Murray is visiting the Northern Rivers region to work with the UCRH researchers in developing a program of research on the impact of the recent floods on mental health and wellbeing. The research will commence with a population survey in September. The focus of the research will be on providing high quality scientific information to inform flood recovery response and to support service planning.

The UCRH is seeking support from community-based organisations that can help to ensure the survey is completed by individuals and groups who have been particularly affected by the flood, and people who may have difficulty completing an online survey.

Professor Murray will speak at public forums at the UCRH in Lismore on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July and in Murwillumbah on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July and will also meet with first responders, policy makers and business owners. Members of the public are welcome to attend these forums but places are limited and registrations essential. To register contact [linda.pike@sydney.edu.au](mailto:linda.pike@sydney.edu.au)

**Media information:**

**Linda Pike, UCRH (02) 6620 7231 or 0422 606 916**

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