

# Not a Patch on reality



**Clowning around . . . Patch Adams is critical of the 'shallow' way he was portrayed by Robin Williams (above). Main picture: STEVE MORENOS**

by **CATHY STUBBS**

PATCH Adams does not like being known as the laughing doctor.

In fact, in the *Central Coast Express Advocate's* short interview with him on Tuesday, he was not funny at all.

He bristled at the mention of the Robin Williams film about his life which he described as "shallow and superficial".

"I'm not the laughing doctor - I'm a political activist trying to bring peace, justice and care to all people everywhere," he said.

Dr Adams was in Sydney this week to speak to the

## Doctor critical of movie

International Conference on Longevity. He was invited to speak with Central Coast health professionals at Invitation to Health medical centre, Wyoming.

Sporting bright blue dye in his long grey hair and wearing his trademark clown pants and multicoloured shirt and tie, Dr Adams brought his message of "joy and caring" to doctors, nurses and allied health workers.

Many participants described Dr Adams as "a

character" and said they found his words inspiring.

Invitation to Health medical centre opened last year and uses an integrative approach to deliver health care with a team that includes both traditional western medicine as well as alternative methods such as massage, Chinese herbs, acupuncture and naturopathy. Dr Adams said he encouraged members of the new medical centre to follow their dreams.

"They are launching a new

experiment here and I sensed there was some fear about diving right in," he said.

"I wanted to excite them to dive right in."

Dr Adams founded the Gesundheit! Institute in the US 20 years ago and it was the philosophy of that organisation which inspired Penny Caldicott to set up the centre.

"I could relate to what Gesundheit! was trying to achieve," Dr Caldicott said.

According to the Gesundheit! Institute website,

when a dream takes hold, you should run with it.

"We cannot separate the health of the individual from the health of the family, the community, and the world," the website states.

"Much more than simply a medical center, the Gesundheit! facility is a microcosm of life, integrating medical care with farming, arts and crafts, performing arts, education, nature, recreation, friendship and fun.

"Gesundheit! has grown out of a deep concern for the quality of people's lives. We want to subvert greed and selfishness and replace them with compassion and care."