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Quality use of medicine overlooked in budget

The Federal Budget has left a void in best practice quality use of medicines following the Government's decision to discontinue the Enhanced Divisional Quality Use of Medicines (EDQUM) program according to the Australian General Practice Network (AGPN).

AGPN and the Divisions Network had under the EDQUM program been working with a range of organisations including the National Prescribing Service to deliver a more evidence-based approach to prescribing.

AGPN Chair Dr Tony Hobbs said it is essential that the Divisions Network drives the development of new quality use of medicines initiatives that will improve patient outcomes.

"Having a quality use of medicines program is critical to general practice and our patients.

"AGPN in collaboration with a number of Divisions nationally have been working on solutions to increase quality of medicines for some time.

"I urge the Minister to consider implementing a replacement program immediately so those involved can continue the good work," Dr Hobbs said.

AGPN CEO Kate Carnell said the Divisions Network's unique nation-wide infrastructure can encourage and promote GP use of the quality use of medicine Practice Incentive Payment.

"There is no doubt our capacity to deliver is on record. Divisions have never been better placed to drive quality in health care delivery. It is disappointing that the Government's decision to discontinue investment in the Enhanced Divisional Quality Use of Medicines program failed to capitalise on this.

"There are a range of opportunities and system models that could act as replacements in this area. These must be seriously looked at to fill this void.

"AGPN on behalf of the Divisions Network would welcome the opportunity to work closely with Australian Government to find a replacement model to ensure Australia is not left behind in best practice prescribing methods," Ms Carnell said.

For more information please phone AGPN CEO Kate Carnell on 0415 662 266