



Fortnightly e-newsletter of the Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd
Volume 5 Number 24

15 December 2003

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*Wishing you Season's Greetings! Please note: The ADGP office will be closed
on December 23 and will reopen on January 5, 2004.*

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■ CEO's Report

Medicare Plus

With the announcement of the Government's revised "MedicarePlus" package (see <http://www.health.gov.au/medicareplus/index.htm> for detailed information), the Senate has reconstituted the

Senate Select Committee on Medicare, to conduct a public inquiry on the various components of the package, as outlined in the new Terms of Reference.

Item (b)(i) refers specifically to the legislative provisions needed for the adoption of the proposed "safety nets" for concessional and non-concessional patients.

The four main GP groups (ADGP, AMA, RACGP and RDAA) issued a joint Communiqué on *MedicarePlus* from the recent GPRG meeting.

Also, ADGP has identified components of *MedicarePlus* that will specifically impact on the Divisions Network, namely the Aged Care Panels, the Overseas Trained Doctors scheme, Practice Nurse MBS items and HIC Online.

The implementation of these components will involve provision of support to GPs and practices and/or development of specific Divisional programs. It is important that the Network flags potential implementation concerns early, to ensure that further development of the package takes practical "on the ground" issues into consideration.

ADGP is presently developing a submission to the Inquiry on these issues, and is seeking input from Divisions. Submissions to the Senate Committee are due by 19 December.

Please provide comments to Kerry Ungerer by December 17 at kungerer@adgp.com.au or telephone 02 6228 0828.

ADGP Financial Management Review

This week the Financial Management Review team from KPMG began working with ADGP in our office. This review resulted from an ADGP request to the Department of Health and Ageing for consideration of extra funding.

Both ADGP and the Department of Health and Ageing have a positive outlook on the process and are working well on the review, which we are confident will reveal the need to increase resources to our organisation.

The review is expected to be completed in mid January 2004.

Season's Greetings

The past year has seen a change in Health Ministers, a change in ADGP offices, and plenty of change within in the primary health care sector.

We have recorded many achievements, including the signing of the NACCHO Memorandum of Understanding, the Vision for Divisions' Strategic Summit, a positive consultation process on the Review of the role of Divisions, an outstanding Divisions Network Forum and the successful lobbying of the Australian Government on a number of key policy issues.

The ADGP office will close on December 23, 2003, and re-open on January 5, 2004. Our next edition of ADGP News will be circulated on Monday January 12, 2004.

After a busy year, may the festive season allow you time for rest and reflection. I wish you all well in the New Year.

■ Finalisation of the AHPMC Program

As many of you will be aware, the After Hours Primary Medical (AHPMC) is drawing to a close. The SBO Policy Officer positions will cease mid-December, and the Principal Adviser at ADGP, Elke Purnell, will finish in this role mid-February.

We are hoping to put in place some measures that will continue to support Divisions in AHPMC through ADGP and SBO websites. In addition, the Department has advised that their State officers will be available for support. Any other suggestions on how this might best be done would be very welcome. Please email Elke Purnell at epurnell@adgp.com.au.

The Policy Officer Network has covered substantial ground over the course of the program. Among a range of successes, we have seen a large increase in momentum in relation to AHPMC issues, supported Divisions in development of proposals for funding through the Department of Health and Ageing's service development grants, with 75 per cent of all grants going to Divisions, and developed strong relationships with key stakeholders at local, State/Territory and national levels. We have developed a discussion paper on AHPMC which is in the final stages of completion and will be made available on the ADGP website.

A very special thanks

A special thanks to the SBO Policy Officers, Nicole Petterson (GPDV), Libby Morrow (QDGP), Deb Watson (ANSWD), Ricki Knoetze (GPDWA), Tania Manser (SADI), Martin Blaszczyk (GPPHCNT) for all their hard work and best wishes for life after AHPMC.

■ Future focussed: Forum follow-up on-line

Forum presentations now available on-line

Presentations at the Divisions of General Practice Network Forum 2003 in Brisbane last month are now available on the ADGP web site.

Simply go to the Forum page of the ADGP website to access the papers, or click on the link above.

Futurist Peter Ellyard

Futurist and strategic analyst Dr Peter Ellyard provided a challenging and thought-provoking keynote address at Forum 2003. Dr Ellyard addressed the issue of Creating the Sustainable GP in the 21st Century: from survival to thrival.

His full set of [background notes](#) is available on the ADGP website.

Many within the Divisions Network are keen to continue the thought-provoking discussion sparked by Dr Ellyard's speech, so ADGP has begun a [discussion forum](#) on its website.

We look forward to your contributions.

Division Achievement Awards now on ADGP web site

Those of you who missed reading the [feature articles](#) in Medical Observer about the Divisions Achievement Awards finalists can now access these articles on the ADGP website for you to read at your leisure!

Check them out at via the link above.

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■ Complete Primary Care Update

Contact Michael Janssen, Principal Adviser, mjanssen@adgp.com.au

Complete Primary Care integrates and improves recently introduced innovations to general practice into effective clinical and business processes that achieve significant patient, practice and health system outcomes. CPC is not a new program but a new approach using existing programs already endorsed by the Commonwealth

and national stakeholders, to enhance quality patient outcomes, general practice sustainability, and GP job-satisfaction.

Divisions Forum launch of ADGP/Medibank alliance on CPC

ADGP has forged an alliance with Medibank Private that has seen the new active electronic templates placed on Medical Director in the November update.

Known as the Complete Primary Care (CPC) Templates, these tools reduce red tape and improve quality in the performance of MBS item such as Home Medicine Reviews, EPC and the various SIP services such as the Mental Health and Asthma three step programs.

CPC templates are fully interactive, populating directly from the patient record information required by the forms associated with EPC and other items.

The CPC templates are available in the November update of Medical Director from the Medibank "GP Resource Centre". The CPC templates were recently launched at the Divisions Network Forum in November in Brisbane.

Port Macquarie GP Dr Trina Gregory and ADGP's Michael Janssen presented CPC to the Practice Capacity Seminar and more than 80 GPs at a Divisions Forum workshop with resoundingly positive feedback.

Developing collaboration around CPC

ADGP is currently finalising initial research into the CPC model funded by a small grant from the Department of Health and Ageing. It is envisaged that the report or a summary of it with commercially confidential material deleted will be available to Divisions in the New Year.

The research project has been undertaken to inform development of a demonstration project to both progress and prove the value of the CPC model within general practice.

A number of collaborations are forming around the CPC model for the purpose of developing the CPC program and making it available to GPs and practices. ADGP is working with the intellectual property owners and other interests to ensure the program is complimentary to the work of the Divisions network. Calls for expressions of interest may be issued in the New Year.

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■ Youth news update

The latest edition of NDYA News Update is now available.

NDYA News Update is designed facilitate the sharing of news, events and other information related to the health of young people and primary care with GPs, Divisions of General Practice and other youth health stakeholders.

The final 2003 edition of the [NDYA News Update](#) is now available on the NDYA website in both word and pdf formats. It can be viewed by visiting the NDYA site by clicking on the hyperlink above.

This edition is a 'bumper' issue and contains information and links on issues such as: updates on 'Medicare Plus' and Medicare cards for under sixteens; MindMatters Plus GP; NDYA events at the National Divisions Network Forum in November; the new ADGP and NDYA Dr Link collaboration; Children of Parents with a Mental Illness GP resources; the Youth in Mind 2 Virtual Reunion now on, plus new reports, resources, training, grants information, conference listings and more!

If you would like to subscribe to NDYA's newsletter or have resources, research, events or information to contribute to NDYA News, please let us know. You can e-mail contributions of between 100 and 300 words (500 max) to ndya@adgp.com.au accompanied by contact details or a website link for further information.

Seasons Greetings on behalf of the National Divisions Youth Alliance staff and NDYA Reference Group!

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■ Program Poster masters available to Divisions

A suite of six posters highlighting programs run through Divisions of General Practice are now available for use by Divisions. These posters were developed by ADGP and displayed at the 2003 Divisions Forum.

Programs promoted in the suite include Mental Health, Immunisation, Quality Use of Medicine, After Hours Primary Medical Care, Youth, and Palliative Care.

Divisions interested in receiving poster artwork on CD which they can print locally, adding their local Division details and contacts, are welcome to contact ADGP.

If you wish to view the posters or find out more information, please contact Helen Beringen at ADGP via e-mail at hberingen@adgp.com.au.

■ Divisions' Capacity for Information and Data Exchange

The ADGP, in a consortium led by the Centre for GP Integration Studies (UNSW) is undertaking a GPCG research project looking at Divisions' Capacity For Information And Data Exchange. A key component of this includes the role of the Division.

Divisions are encouraged to actively participate in this important area of investigation by completing the survey, which is an important component of the Divisions Capacity Project funded by the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA).

The survey seeks to collect information from Divisions on :

- The data they are currently collecting from GPs and other stakeholders;
- The purposes and uses of the data;
- The capacity of Divisions to collect, aggregate and use data in a quality improvement framework;
- Priorities for message development; and
- Privacy issues related to data collection, storage and use

The information collected from the survey will be analysed and included in the project's final report to DoHA due in February 2004.

It would be appreciated if surveys could be completed electronically (steps on how to do this are included at the start of the survey) and returned via email to J.Taggart@unsw.edu.au by December 24th.

If your Division has not received the questionnaire, or would like more information, please contact Jane Taggart Jane Taggart, Senior Research Associate, UNSW (CGPIS), on 02 9385 8763, mobile: 0425 258 949 or J.Taggart@unsw.edu.au.

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■ *i*CDM-bulletin extracts

*The following is an edited summary of the most recent weekly **iCDM-bulletin** prepared by Mark Brommeyer, ADGP's Principal Adviser, Chronic Disease and Information Management. The full text of all bulletins is available through the [ADGP website's document library](#).*

Mark is contactable on e-mail: mbrommeyer@adgp.com.au

ADGP's Chronic Disease and Information Management ***i*CDM-bulletin** on December 4 reported on:
Consumer Participation Training and Teaching Resources FREE

The National Resource Centre for Consumer Participation in Health, La Trobe University, has a new Training section on their website: www.participateinhealth.org.au/train. It contains general information and resources on Consumer Participation Training and also a new free Training Resource that helps organisations build their own workshops. Download the Training Resource from

www.participateinhealth.org.au/train/training_resource.asp

Applying for certification electronically

GPs can apply for both the Healthcare Individual (HCI) Certificate and Healthcare Location (HCL) Certificate electronically. By using this process, you can save time and minimise risks of re-key errors when your application is processed.

To apply for your Individual Certificate visit: www.hesa.com.au and follow the 'apply for certificate' link. To apply for your Location Certificate either call the PKI Customer Service Centre on 1300 660 035 or e-mail registration@hesa.com.au and request an electronic registration kit.

The full text of all editions of the [iCDM-bulletin](#) are available online.

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■ Recall of ventolin inhalers

Australia's medicines watchdog, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), has announced that the pharmaceutical company, GlaxoSmithKline, (GSK) has voluntarily recalled what remains of a batch of 63,000 Ventolin 100mcg CFC-Free Inhalers because of a potential faulty valve.

GSK believes that the likelihood of a consumer receiving an inhaler with a faulty valve is low due to the small number of inhalers affected. However, as Ventolin is used for acute relief of asthma and chronic obstructive airways disease symptoms, there is a potential for the patient's condition to worsen if they cannot use their Ventolin inhaler when required.

The Ventolin that is being recalled has been on the Australian market since May 2003 and it is likely that most of the stock has been purchased and used.

People who use Ventolin inhalers are encouraged to check the batch number of their inhaler by pulling out the canister from the tube and locating the batch number on the bottom of the canister label. If the batch number corresponds with **Batch Number KN6261**, consumers are advised to return the inhaler to the place of purchase for exchange at no cost.

It is, however, important that consumers not cease using any respiratory medication without consulting their medical practitioner first.

For further information call the Ventolin Customer Line on 1800 009 395

■ Heart Foundation launches new hypertension guidelines

The National Heart Foundation of Australia has launched the Hypertension Management Guide for Doctors 2004, a resource for all general practitioners and other health professionals involved in the management of hypertension.

The guide provides updated patient assessment and management recommendations including an emphasis on lifestyle modifications as first line intervention, even when drug therapy is recommended.

The Heart Foundation assessed key Australian and international evidence-based clinical guidelines, scientific articles and trial data to develop the new guidelines.

25,000 copies of the guidelines have been distributed nationally to all GPs and copies are also available from Heartline on 1300 36 27 87.

A full copy of "Hypertension Management Guide for Doctors 2004" is also available on the Heart Foundation website: www.heartfoundation.com.au.

■ Review of PHC RIS

The Department of Health and Ageing is currently conducting a review of the Primary Health Care Research and Information Service (PHC RIS). One of the key aims of the review is to determine the extent to which the services and information provided by PHC RIS meet the needs of users.

Siggins Miller Consultants Pty Ltd has been engaged by the Department to conduct the review and have begun the process of seeking input from stakeholders. Siggins Miller has a long track record in organizational review and development in the human services.

The method for the PHC RIS review includes the following elements:

- Collection and collation of data and information in relation to the extent to which PHC RIS has met its contractual obligations to the funding body
- A review of national and international literature on knowledge transfer
- A site visit to PHC RIS to interview staff, management and representatives of the host university
- Extensive key informant interviews with representatives of Divisions, SBOs and ADGP, representatives of University Departments of General Practice and other key University based Primary Care centres, and representatives of the Department of Health and Ageing.
- A final workshop in Adelaide attended by PHC RIS management, staff and Board members, representatives of all the key stakeholder groups to discuss the findings and possible future directions.

The review is expected to report by the end of April 2004. Stakeholders may be contacted by telephone and asked to take part in a short survey that will examine their experience with PHC RIS. This survey will be conducted during the next two months.

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■ Managing acute musculoskeletal pain

Evidence-based information on the management of acute musculoskeletal pain has been approved by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NH&MRC) and is now available for health professionals at www.nhmrc.gov.au.

The project was funded by the Department of Health and Ageing and coordinated by the University of Queensland Faculty of Health Sciences.

The document outlines what is currently known about diagnosing and treating acute lower back, thoracic spinal, neck, shoulder and anterior knee pain.

A summary of the evidence review and five consumer information sheets will be available on the NH&MRC website in early 2004.

■ New ADGP Staff

ADGP welcomes Marie Bampton as a new Immunisation team member. Marie brings with her a wide variety of skills to the position, assisting Diana Terry, ADGP's Principal Advisor - Immunisation.

Marie's experience includes executive and team coaching; consultant project management and project officer work with ACT DGP in the areas of immunisation and communicable diseases; health educator on youth projects, as well as workplace health, & alcohol and drugs.

■ Conferences and Courses

Do you have a patient at risk of a fall?

Do you have a patient over 65 with muscle weakness, gait or balance problems, cognitive impairment, osteoporosis, syncope, postural hypotension or arrhythmia? If so, your patient might be at risk for a fall.

The RACP will be conducting 14 one-day workshops in metropolitan and regional Australia to provide GPs with the latest information on risk factors, therapeutic interventions and local resources.

Courses will run in the following states:

Queensland: Friday 27 February Brisbane, Saturday 29 February Townsville

Victoria: Saturday 6 March Mildura, Friday 19 March Melbourne (Seniors' Festival), Saturday 20 March Bendigo.

South Australia: Friday 26 March Adelaide, Saturday 27 March Elizabeth

Tasmania: Friday 16 April Hobart, Saturday 17 April Launceston

Western Australia: Saturday 24 April Bunbury, Saturday 1 May Fremantle

New South Wales: Saturday 8 May Coffs Harbour, Saturday 22 May Albury

ACT: Friday 21 May

For further information contact Susan Bogle, Health Promotions Project Officer susan.bogle@racp.edu.au or hpu@racp.edu.au Website under construction. Follow link from www.racp.edu.au

AGPAL extends conference early bird registrations

AGPAL/QIP are extending the closing date for early bird registrations for their 2nd international conference, "Quality... and all that Jazz!" at Conrad Jupiters on the Gold Coast from 26 - 28 February 2004. Early bird registrations will now close on 14 December 2003.

Please go to www.rcmsolutions.com.au to complete your registration details for the conference. Participants are being encouraged to take advantage of the \$100 registration discount before December 14 2003, which includes a ticket to the opening Cocktail Party and Gala Dinner.

Visit www.agpal.com.au to get a full list of speakers and presenters. To request a registration form and conference brochure, please email the Conference Convenor, Fran Ryan at fryan@agpal.com.au.

International Conference on Longevity

The inaugural International Conference on Longevity is to be held in Sydney from March 5-7, 2004.

Registration is available on-line at www.longevity-international.com.

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■ Positions vacant

The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), National Secretariat in Canberra, has the following vacancies:

POLICY OFFICER (WORKFORCE)

Coordinate the NACCHO Workforce Issues Policy Officers Network. Research, policy and advocacy work on Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services workforce issues including workplace relations issues, union and award development.

POLICY OFFICER (GENERAL PRACTICE)

Coordinate NACCHO's participation in the General Practice (GP) sector, progress recommendations of the GP Strategy Review on Aboriginal Health and implement the ADGP/NACCHO MOU Work Plan. Provide timely advice to the Board and other stakeholders GP related strategies, including education, training and accreditation.

POLICY OFFICER (GENERAL PRACTICE NETWORK – Expected Vacancy)

This is a **two year** project with the primary aim of maintaining NACCHO's GP Network. The Network is a forum for exchange of information between GPs and GP Registrars working in Aboriginal health, with particular focus on the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector (ACCHS). Provide timely advice to the Board and other GP stakeholders in relation to the GP Network.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT OFFICER

Coordinate the administrative arrangements for Board Meetings. Provide administrative support to a small team, including developing effective communication systems and organising seminars, meetings, and NACCHO conferences.

PROJECT OFFICER (CONSUMER QUALITY USE OF MEDICINES PROJECT) (expected vacancy)

This is a **two year** project with the primary aim of improving the Quality Use of Medicines in Aboriginal communities within the context of the National Medicines Policy and the National Strategy for Quality Use of Medicines. This project will be managed and implemented through a partnership between NACCHO and the National Prescribing Service, the Consumers' Health Forum and other consumer organisations.

PROJECT OFFICER (SECTION 100 SUPPORT PROJECT) (expected vacancy)

This is a **one year** project funded by the Rural and Remote Pharmacy Workforce Development Program. The project's aim is to improve access to, and quality use of, medicines for Aboriginal communities by improving support to community pharmacists and ACCHSs participating in s100 initiatives. Pharmaceutical qualifications would be highly desirable.

NACCHO is the national peak body for over 127 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services throughout Australia. The National Secretariat has responsibility for the coordination and development of policies and programs under the direction of the National Executive Committee.







Selection documentation can be obtained from www.naccho.org.au or Louise Touhy 02 6282 7513, PA@naccho.org.au. For further information regarding the positions please contact Louise Cooke on 02-62827513. Applications addressing the selection criteria along with two referee reports (preferably including at least one from an Aboriginal person) are to be submitted in writing by close of business January 30, 2003 to The Chief Executive Officer, NACCHO, PO Box 168, Deakin West ACT 2600, fax 02 6282 7516.

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Ho! Ho! Ho! CONGRATULATIONS! You made it this far....

Does that mean ADGP News is a useful communication tool for you?

We want to know if ADGP is meeting your needs, and how we can make it better.

-  Is it too long?
-  Is the information provided all useful?
-  What should we not include?
-  What don't we include that we should?
-  Do you access it via our website?
-  Should we upload ADGP News onto our site in Word format so it is easier to disseminate further around the Divisions Network?

Please let Helen Beringen at ADGP know the answers to all of these questions and anything else which you think might be useful to improving this publication, at hberingen@adgp.com.au.

Thanks and Merry Christmas! See you on Monday, January 12, 2004.

Information in this newsletter is for the use and benefit of all members of SBOs and Divisions, so please pass it on, and recycle the whole, or parts, of this publication to your members with due acknowledgement to ADGP. If SBOs, Divisions and other readers have information for, or comments on, ADGP News please contact Helen Beringen on 02 6228 0853 or hberingen@adgp.com.au