



NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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Divisions to improve access to Palliative Care in Rural Australia

Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP) has announced the launch of a new national program at Coffs Harbour, NSW, tomorrow. The Rural Palliative Care Program (RPC) aims to improve access to palliative care services for country people.

Palliative care is care provided to someone in the later stages of a terminal illness, for whom the primary treatment goal is quality of life. Importantly, palliative care also provides much needed aid for the families and carers of dying patients.

ADGP is the peak national body representing 120 Divisions of General Practice across Australia. 95 per cent of general practitioners in Australia are members of their local Division.

Federal local MP, Mr Luke Hartsuyker will launch the program at the Coffs Harbour Education Campus at Southern Cross University tomorrow, Thursday 5 February 2004.

Dr Rob Walters, Chair of ADGP, says "The Rural Palliative Care Program aims to significantly improve access to quality, coordinated palliative care for people living in rural and remote communities.

"Under this program, the Australian Government has provided funding of up to \$5 million over a three year period to several rural Divisions to support the development and implementation of collaborative models to improve access to multidisciplinary palliative care delivery for rural communities.

"General Practitioners in eight rural areas across Australia: Mid North Coast, NSW; Eastern Goldfields, WA; Pilbara, WA; Adelaide Hills, SA; South East NSW; Southern Rural Queensland; West Victoria; and North West Tasmania will run the program through their local Division of General Practice," Dr Walters says.

The RPC Program is a cornerstone in the Australian Government's National Palliative Care Program, which seeks to improve the quality of palliative care offered in the Australian community.

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