



News Release

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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Government expectations exceed funding for Divisions

Whilst welcoming the long-awaited release of the Government's response to the Review of the Role of Divisions of General Practice, the Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP) has found little reassurance that the response will generate long-term improvements for primary care delivery in Australia.

"ADGP welcomes the Minister's invitation to the Network to engage with the Government on the Review's recommendations and the Government's response," said ADGP Chair Dr Rob Walters.

"We call on the Department of Health & Ageing to hold a national consultation workshop as a matter of urgency, to ensure that our concerns regarding implementation can be discussed in an open and productive manner.

"The Government's response to the Review has been a long time coming, and its release will finally allow Divisions to start planning for their future," said Dr Walters.

"Divisions now have increased certainty of funding and greater clarity of the Government's expectations for the Network.

"Unfortunately, however, the Government has ignored many of the Network's recommendations regarding efficient and sustainable delivery of primary care at the regional level", he said.

"Information management systems and data are a major focus of the response, yet this continues to be an area in which Divisions are grossly underfunded, despite their considerable success in improving general practice computerisation and use of clinical information systems.

"Similarly, the Government continues to place major importance of the role of Divisions in chronic disease management on one hand, yet with the other it has taken away the funding that allows them to deliver these services."

The Government's response has cut indexation of Division Network funding to 2007-2008 to one half current levels, putting the remaining funding into a competitive funding pool for high performing Divisions.

"Reducing Divisions' funding in real terms by up to 8-10% is clearly unsustainable given the Government's expanded priority areas for Division activities," said Dr Walters.

"Furthermore, the "innovations" funding model has already been trialled and we've seen how the "thousand flowers blooming" approach has failed to translate into sustainable, long-term improvements in service delivery that improve health outcomes."

ADGP is the peak body of the Divisions of General Practice Network which links 95 per cent of GPs across Australia in a national structure that supports general practice and improves community access to primary care. This Network is the key to integrating general practice with other sectors of the health system, both government and non-government, to deliver high quality care to the Australian community.

For comment:

Dr Rob Walters, ADGP Chair, 0418 127 123

For further information:

Kerry Ungerer, ADGP Communications Manager, 0412 424 309