



# NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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## Rural Divisions Celebrate National Palliative Care Week

The Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP) and several rural Divisions will join in celebrating National Palliative Care Week from Sunday May 23-29, 2004.

National Palliative Care Week (NPCW) is the national awareness week held each year across Australia to raise awareness of palliative care in Australia.

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

Eight of Australia's Divisions of General Practice, which link 95 per cent of GPs across Australia in a national structure that supports general practice and improves community access to primary care, have been awarded funding for the Rural Palliative Care Program (RPC) aimed at improving access to palliative care services for country people.

North West Tasmanian Division of General Practice will launch their Rural Palliative Care Project during National Palliative Care Week and the Mid North Coast Division of General Practice, NSW, will promote their Rural Palliative Care Project to their local community by hosting a social function and publishing articles in the local media.

ADGP Chair Dr Rob Walters said: "The Rural Palliative Care Program, launched in February this year, 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 are running the program through their local Division of General Practice."

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.

*For comment:* Dr Rob Walters, ADGP Chair 0418 127 123  
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*For further information on the awareness-raising activities that will be conducted by the eight RPC Rural Divisions of General Practice please contact Wendy Campbell, ADGP on 02 6228 0835 or 0409 744 821.*