



News Release

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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Aged Care initiative strengthens local partnerships

The Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP) today welcomed the Federal Government's new Aged Care General Practitioner Panels Initiative in supporting Divisions of General Practice, GPs and the aged care industry to develop and strengthen partnerships that will ultimately benefit residents of aged care homes

The initiative, which takes effect from 1 July 2004, provides funding of \$18.2m to participating GPs, \$15.1m to participating Divisions of General Practice and a further \$14.6m for Comprehensive Medical Assessments.

ADGP Chair Dr Rob Walters said many of the aged care providers who participated in a recent series of State and Territory aged care workshops had indicated their general support for the initiative and hoped that this would lead to enhanced primary care outcomes for residents of aged care homes.

"Whilst not a panacea, we believe the initiative is an important first step in supporting the participation of GPs in quality initiatives in aged care homes and assisting GPs and Divisions to work more effectively with aged care homes," said Dr Walters.

Many Divisions of General Practice have already begun the necessary work to implement this initiative. The initiative will encourage Divisions to establish strong partnerships with their local aged care homes and to work in collaboration to identify and address local issues, and recognises the work that many Divisions have already been undertaking in this area.

Mr Greg Mundy CEO of the Aged & Community Services Australia said: "These initiatives will also hopefully help to improve access to GPs for residents of aged care homes, which has been a problem for some time. ACSA is working hard with the ADGP to ensure this initiative is based on genuine partnerships."

Some of the benefits for aged care homes identified by participants in recent State and Territory aged care workshops were:

- improved communications with GPs;
- greater ability to make changes to local processes, networks and supports to support high quality care;
- improved ability to deliver high quality care (eg through introduction of emergency care protocols) and give confidence to staff;
- reduction in inappropriate emergency transfers to hospital;
- more timely access to primary medical care for residents; and
- more consistency in medical care / GPs providing care.

ADGP is the peak national body representing Australia's 120 Divisions of General Practice. About 95 per cent of GPs belong to a local Division of General Practice.

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