

May 2004

THE NEWSLETTER OF ADGP'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

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The Primary Mental Health Care eBulletin is designed to inform Divisions of General practice, general practitioners, policy makers, and other health and community stakeholders about developments in primary mental health care.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **New Psychiatry Support Service for GPs**
- **Better Outcomes evaluation commencing soon**
- **Managing Alcohol and Mental Health Comorbidity in Primary Care**
- **MindMatters Plus GP Initiative update**
- **Medicare Plus and Better Outcomes: how do they relate?**
- **New resources for GPs working with children of parents with mental illness**

BETTER OUTCOMES IN MENTAL HEALTH CARE INITIATIVE

After almost 2 years of implementation, over 5,000 GPs have completed mental health skills training with over 3,600 GPs credentialed to participate in the Initiative. That is, around 1 in 7 GPs are participating in the Initiative with up to 1 in 4 in some States, and 1 in 3 in regional centres.

For the four quarters ending March 2004, the total number of 3-step mental health services was 13,648 across a cumulative total of 3,208 providers. For the same period the number of MBS FPS services was 14,626 across a cumulative total of 666 providers. There are currently 69 services across 76 Divisions with take up expected across most Divisions by the end of this year.

New Psychiatry Support Service for GPs Now Available

The service will be available 24 hours, 7 days a week, via an 1800 number, by fax or email.

A new, freely available psychiatry support service for GPs has been launched. It will provide GPs with timely, quality clinical advice from psychiatrists on management and/or treatment of patients with an urgent mental health problem.

The service will be a twelve-month pilot and is funded under the *Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care Initiative*. It is available to **all** GPs, not just those enrolled in *Better Outcomes*.

Two models of service delivery are being trialled.

1. A seamless service will be available to all GPs in each state and territory EXCEPT SA. The service will be available 24 hours, 7 days a week, via an 1800 number, by fax or email. GPs will receive advice in writing **within 24 hours**.

To access the service in States and Territories (other than South Australia), please:

Phone: 1800 200 588

Fax: 02-9425 3879

Email: psychsupport.com.au

2. For South Australian GPs, a state-wide service is offered which builds networks between GPs and private psychiatrists. GPs can request urgent advice via telephone, fax or email and will receive advice within 24 hours. In addition, a one-off consultation will be offered for assessment and advice where appropriate between the GP, psychiatrist and consumer.

To access the SA service, please:

Phone: 08-8179 1707

Fax: 08-8271 8344

Email: upasa@sadi.org.au

Click on [Urgent Psychiatrist Q & A](#) for answers to common questions about the service.

Familiarisation Training

Familiarisation Training can be delivered in both face-to-face and self-directed modes. The Self Directed Package comprises an online power point presentation and a workbook. The training takes approximately two hours to complete. *The Familiarisation Training GP and Practice Manual* must be used in conjunction with the Package. Copies of the manual are available from Divisions or can be downloaded online. For further instructions on how to complete the self-directed training see: [Resources for GPs - Familiarisation Training Resources](#)

Familiarisation Training must be processed through Divisions to facilitate the registration process for GPs. Familiarisation Training evaluation summary forms are forwarded to ADGP at mentalhealth@adgp.com.au and attendance lists are sent to the RACGP and the General Practice Mental Health Standards Collaboration. The RACGP is no longer accepting Familiarisation Training Attendance Lists in any other format than the new electronic format – see [Electronic Attendance List Template.xls](#), | [Microsoft Excel Worksheet, 30 KB](#)

New Education and Training Standards

The General Practice Mental Health Standards Collaboration (GPMHSC) has recently undertaken a full review of the training standards for level one and two skills training. The revised standards have been accepted by the Better Outcomes Implementation Advisory Group and will come into effect from 1 January 2005. All current programs will need to be reaccredited for the new RACGP triennium (2005-2007).

Evaluation

The evaluation of *Better Outcomes* is about to commence. A sample of both Divisions and GPs will be consulted as part of this process. This builds on the evaluation of 15 original allied health pilots being conducted by the Centre for Health Program at the University of Melbourne.

Divisions who are part of the pilots' evaluation can contact the National Evaluation Team for support.

Divisions who are part of the pilots' evaluation can contact the National Evaluation Team for support. Divisions in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory should contact Belinda Morley on bcmorley@unimelb.edu.au; Divisions in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory should contact Fay Kohn on fkohn@unimelb.edu.au.

OTHER ADGP PRIMARY MENTAL HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES

Managing Alcohol and Mental Health Comorbidity in Primary Care

A \$2 million grant to ADGP from the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation (AER Foundation) was announced in February 2004 in a media launch involving the Parliamentary Secretary for Health, the Hon Trish Worth. The project is a government-community-general practice partnership and will develop self-help resources, education and training for GPs, and local collaborative care initiatives to prevention and treatment of comorbidity in general practice. A project officer commences in early June. Funding for up to 15 Divisions or Divisional consortia will be developed and disseminated over the next couple of months. Watch this bulletin and the ADGP website for updates.

- [19/02/2004 AERF Release](#) | [adobe pdf](#)  35 KB

MindMatters Plus GP Initiative

The Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing is contributing a further \$1.125 million over two years for MindMatters GP Initiative. The majority of the 17 Division/school partnerships formed under MindMatters Plus GP are now implementing local projects such as developing clinical referral pathways, expanding networks of care and other mental health promotion and prevention strategies in the school-general practice setting.

Funding guidelines for other Divisions interested in participating in MindMatters Plus GP will be available soon. Work on a resource kit has also commenced to assist Divisions implement MindMatters Plus GP. For further information, please contact Audrey Graviou, Project Officer, MindMatters

Developing
clinical referral
pathways,
expanding
networks of
care and other
mental health
promotion and
prevention

Plus GP, ADGP on phone (02) 6228 0844 or email: agraviou@adgp.com.au.
Click on [MM+ GP Initiative](#) for a fact sheet.

National Study into the Management of Depression in General Practice: Extension and Follow Up

Along with *beyondblue*, ADGP has been working to support Monash University's National Study into the Management of Depression in General Practice. The first phase looked at GP assessment and management of depression, and their educational needs in this area—see:

[Summary of Results](#) | [Microsoft Word doc !\[\]\(74d4806277d7e73349d8e8c0897931e9_img.jpg\) 72KB](#)

A follow-up phase is about to commence involving GPs who responded to the original study, and will look at the impact of the Better Outcomes Initiative on GPs' management of depression. ADGP supports this study because of its potential to provide a large number of GPs with the opportunity to provide input into future training and national mental health initiatives. In May, All Divisions were sent a joint, emailed letter from ADGP and Monash University about this next phase and what is involved.

Scoping study of Mental Health Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention in General Practice

Partners in Prevention: Mental Health and General Practice is the report of the scoping study of mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention activities in the general practice setting conducted by Auseinet in collaboration with ADGP. The report will be downloadable from ADGP's website soon. Auseinet has funding in 2004–05 and 2005–06 to support implementation and will continue to seek Divisional input and advice through ADGP. Auseinet and ADGP would like to thank the 71 Divisions who participated in the study. For more information about Auseinet—The Australian Network for Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention for Mental Health—see www.auseinet.com.

Media Releases and Mental Health Information Sheets

ADGP regularly produces media releases and information sheets on a range of mental health issues. See www.adgp.com.au under Programs, National Primary Mental Health Care Initiative.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS OF INTEREST

Medicare Plus

How does the Medicare Plus item relate to other allied health programs?

The Government's MedicarePlus announced on 10 March 2004 includes a specific item for allied health services in the context of the EPC Program. It covers allied mental health providers such as psychologists. Many Divisions have been asking how the MedicarePlus item relates to other programs such as MAHS and Better Outcomes.

The MedicarePlus item, Better Outcomes and MAHS are distinct programs with different target populations and different delivery mechanisms. The MedicarePlus item does not replace these existing programs, but complements them by providing reimbursement for specific allied health services provided to patients with chronic or terminal conditions and complex needs that are being managed under an EPC multidisciplinary care plan. Allied health services under Better Outcomes, on the other hand, are available to targeted consumers who would benefit from short term focused psychological strategies by appropriately qualified mental health professionals. The implementation details for the Medicare Plus items are still to be finalized. [For more information](#) Microsoft Word doc, 27KB

New Comorbidity Monograph

Under the *National Comorbidity Initiative*, the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) have published a comorbidity monograph, *Comorbid mental disorders and substance use disorders: Epidemiology, prevention and treatment*. The Initiative is a collaboration between the National Drug and Mental Health Strategies. The 2005 Federal Budget extends the total funding for the Initiative to over \$9 million over 5 years.

This monograph and *Models of Intervention and Care for Psychostimulant Users*: monograph series 51 are both downloadable from <http://www.nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au> where they are both listed as new additions to the site. Hard copies can be ordered by emailing nmm@nationalmailing.com.au or by telephone 1800 020 103 (extensions 8654).

Children of Parents with Mental Illness—New Resources

The COPMI website for people working with families affected by parental mental illness at <http://www.copmi.net.au> contains newly developed, fully downloadable information for general practice, along with other service providers. It also contains information about relevant books, factsheets, videos and CDs, and programs and services available in Australia for children of parents with mental illness and their families.

Youth Mental Health

The National Divisions Youth Alliance has developed an Adolescent Health Check template. It is available on the May update of Medical Director general practice software. It incorporates a number of tools including the HEADSS mnemonic to assist GPs gain an understanding of a young person's psychosocial health. For more information see [National Divisions Youth Alliance](#).

Australian Primary Mental Health Resource Centre

The two most recent editions of *PARCUpdate*, the newsletter of the Centre, are available from <http://som.flinders.edu.au/FUSA/PARC/newsletters.html>. The themes are suicide prevention and mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention in general practice. If you would like to receive a hard copy, please contact PARC on 08 8204 5917, or fax 08 8204 4690 or email on parc@flinders.edu.au. A reminder to Divisions to use the PARC website

to post and share your tools, experiences, resources and lessons learnt particularly in getting allied health services up and running.

Understanding Cultural Diversity in Mental Health

A Cultural Awareness Tool (CAT) produced by Multicultural Mental Health Australia provides general guidance to primary care practitioners in how to manage clients with a mental illness in a more culturally aware way. The CAT is designed as a first step in developing cultural competence. The CAT consists of a small booklet and "pocket-size" card with questions designed to elicit the client's understanding of the presenting problem, whilst conducting this assessment in a culturally sensitive manner.

The first edition of CAT has been widely distributed in Western Australia. The revised edition, for national distribution, is now available and can be ordered from: www.mmha.org.au. A PDF version of CAT is available for free download on the MMHA website at <http://www.mmha.org.au/MMHAPublications/Store/CAT/view>

Antenatal and Postnatal Depression

Two major objectives of the *beyondblue* National Postnatal Depression Program are to address community and health professional awareness of antenatal and postnatal depression; and, to reduce the social stigma that many women face when diagnosed with this illness. To facilitate this, *beyondblue* have developed a range of education and self-help materials for women, their families and health professionals. See http://www.beyondblue.org.au/postnataldepression/educational_materials.htm

New Cancer Care Guidelines

An estimated 50,000 Australians suffer anxiety or depression each year following the diagnosis of cancer according to the Chief Executive Officer of the National Breast Cancer Centre, Professor Christine Ewan. The guidelines

are based on comprehensive and systematic reviews of the international research literature and an extensive consultative process to ensure their clinical relevance.

For further information see clinical practice guidelines for the psychosocial care of adults with cancer

<http://www.racgp.org.au/afp/downloads/pdf/january2004/20040123guide.pdf>

UPCOMING EVENTS

9 –11 July 2004, Gold Coast: Gold Coast Institute of Mental Health - 5th International Mental Health Conference, "*Mental Health in Older People*"
Ph: 07 5577 3397, Email: meetings@gcimh.com.au

1–3 September 2004, Gold Coast: *Harvesting Hope: Across the Lifespan*, a joint conference incorporating the 14th TheMHS and 5th AICAFMHA Conferences. ADGP and AICAFMHA will be hosted a full day pre-conference workshop, *Primary Care, Youth and Family Mental Health*. For updates and registration information

www.aicafmha.net.au/conferences/goldcoast2004/index.html

15–17 September, Auckland Aotearoa, New Zealand: The 3rd World Conference: *The Promotion of Mental Health and Prevention of Mental and Behavioural Disorders: From Research to Effective Practice*

<http://www.charity.demon.co.uk/conference.htm>

23–26 September 2004, Adelaide: National Divisions of General Practice Network Forum for 2004: Taking Action. A pre-conference symposium, Building Primary Mental Health Care Capacity will also be run.

ADGP CONTACTS

Ms Leanne Wells, Principal Adviser, Mental Health
Phone (02) 6228 0854
Email: lwells@adgp.com.au

Ms Audrey Graviou, Senior Project Officer, MindMatters Plus GP
Phone (02) 6228 0844
Email: agraviou@adgp.com.au

Ms Wendy Logan, Administrative Assistant

Phone (02) 6228 0823

Email: wlogan@adgp.com.au