

March 2005

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

- Updates on *Better Outcomes* uptake
- Important education and training information
- GP Psychsupport service
- Mental health election commitments
- Senate Inquiry into Mental Health
- Alcohol and Mental Health Comorbidity Project
- When should GPs prescribe SSRIs for adolescent depression?

BETTER OUTCOMES IN MENTAL HEALTH CARE INITIATIVE

Participation in the *Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care* Initiative continues to grow. At March 2005, over 4,000 GPs were registered representing 18.4% Nationally. 105 Divisions are now funded to run allied health services covering 112 Divisions. In February, all funded Divisions were given the opportunity to apply for additional funding to expand service delivery at least until June 2005. Some 50 Divisions lodged applications and service agreements will be offered to Divisions within the next 2-4 weeks.

Important Education and Training Information for Divisions and GPs

Maintenance of Better Outcomes registration

GPs who register with the Initiative are required to meet ongoing education requirements to maintain registration. In the 2002-2004 triennium this was set at 30 CPD points in mental health related activities (with exemptions for some GP registrars).

All GPs will receive a letter this month from the GPMHSC confirming whether the 30 point requirement has been met. The letter will invite GPs to provide ADGP with their details so we can attempt to build a database by Division of registered GPs. Due to privacy constraints, the HIC and GPMHSC are unable to provide this information.

If GPs have not completed the ongoing requirements, they will **no longer** be eligible for the MBS incentives or to refer to allied health services. The GPMHSC has granted an extension to **30 June 2005** to complete further activities to meet the requirement.

For more information see www.racgp.org.au/mentalhealth or contact the GPMHSC at pdomh@racgp.org.au.

Mental health CPD requirements: 2005-2007

GPs should be aware that the CPD requirements for Better Outcomes registered GPs have **changed**. This includes ongoing requirements. All Divisions should have received GPMHSC fact sheets explaining in full the mental health CPD requirements for the 2005-2007 triennium for both level 1 and 2 GPs via their DLO. Alternatively, go to <http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=444>.

Familiarisation Training in the 2005-2007 Triennium

Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care Familiarisation Training, like all other CPD activities continuing into the new education triennium has been issued with new activity numbers. The activity numbers for facilitated or self-directed Familiarisation Training undertaken in 2005-2007 are:

RACGP QA&CPD Program Activity Number: **715642**

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Divisions are reminded that they need to complete and forward an evaluation summary to ADGP

ACRRM PD Program Activity Number: **EEACR-0001-ADGP**

Divisions are reminded that they need to complete and forward an evaluation summary to Australian Divisions of General Practice on fax 02 6228 0899 or email mentalhealth@adgp.com.au – **you may choose to wait until a few GPs have completed the training before completing this step. The Familiarisation Training summary template can be downloaded from the ADGP website at <http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=444>.**

See the fact sheet at <http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=444> for further information about the steps you need to take to process training.

A third, updated edition of Familiarisation Training resources will be available from ADGP's website by mid-March. Funds do not permit reprints of the manuals so Divisions and GPs are encouraged to use on-line, downloadable resources.

Looking for further information and advice?

Each SBO has a Mental Health Development and Liaison Officer who is available to provide divisions with support and advice on *Better Outcomes* and other primary mental health care issues:

Looking for further information and advice?

NSW Ms Sarah Bradfield (02) 9239 2900	VIC Ms Anne Diamond (03) 9341 4213
QLD Ms Cathy Todd (07) 3105 8300	SA Ms Louise Miller Frost (08) 8271 8988
WA Ms Katie Prince (08) 9319 0555	ACT Mr Nick Hillman (020) 6287 8055
TAS Ms Irene Matthews (03) 6224 1114	NT Ms Lesley McBride (08) 892 3881

Allied Health Services

The first and second interim evaluation reports by the Program Evaluation Unit at the University of Melbourne is available to Divisions – contact your DLO. The third interim report will be available in the near future.

Frequently Asked Questions

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Question: How can my Division access HIC claim data for the 3-step mental health process and FPS items reporting purposes?

Answer: ADGP and the DLOs in your SBO are now receiving regular quarterly HIC data by individual Division from the Department. If you have not received this information, contact your DLO.

Question: Our Divisions is having difficulty accessing level 1 and level 2 training for our GPs. What solutions are there to this?

Answer: ADGP has raised repeatedly this issue with the Department and the Better Outcomes Implementation Advisory Group. We understand a number of possible solutions are being considered. ADGP is also in the early stages of negotiating with some training providers about hosting on-line level 1 training on the ADGP website free of charge to GPs. In the meantime, you can contact your DLO who may be able to assist interested Divisions to come together to host a joint event. The GPMHSC website also has a training calendar of dates and locations for a selected number of courses. While not all training providers will advertise this way, Divisions can keep an eye on this for training in nearby locations that may be accessed.

Question: Which GPs are eligible to refer to allied health services funded under *Better Outcomes*?

Answer: Only GPs who are working from an accredited practice and registered with the HIC under *Better Outcomes* are eligible to refer to allied health services. A referral to an allied health service must occur within the context of a 3-step mental health plan, and a (claimable) 3-step mental health plan must occur within an accredited practice.

Question: If an allied health worker sees a patient for 6 sessions and recommends to the GP that another 6 sessions would be beneficial, how does the GP manage the paperwork?

Answer: The GP where there is need to review the initial 3-step process and where clinically indicated or a significant change in the patient's condition order another 6 sessions with the allied health providers. A review would then be required at the end of the second set of 6 sessions, triggering another SIP payment. The GP would need to annotate the reasons for a second set of 6 sessions. Please refer to pages 12 & 15 of the Familiarisation Training GP and Practice Manual.

GP Psychsupport service

A national phone, fax and email service is available to all Australian GPs to provide patient management advice from a psychiatrist. The GP Psychsupport service is funded by the Australian Government as part of the *Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care* Initiative and was trialed in 2004. The GP Psychsupport service is available 7 days a week and offers advice within 24 hours. The service is not intended to meet the needs of emergencies which require police intervention or crisis assessment. These consumers should be referred to your normal acute psychiatric emergency service.

GPs can access the GP Psychsupport service by:

Phone: Call **1800 200 588**. GPs will be asked some brief questions concerning their enquiry, and given a time when a psychiatrist will phone back within 24 hours.

Fax: Fax **(02) 9425 3879**. Faxes from GPs will need to include details regarding the issue for discussion. A psychiatrist will then fax or phone to discuss case details.

Email: www.psychsupport.com.au is a secure and password protected website. GPs simply phone **1800 026 965** to obtain a username and password prior to accessing psychiatrist advice for the first time. They then log onto www.psychsupport.com.au to register their question. A psychiatrist will email a response.

A national phone, fax and email service is available to all Australian GPs to provide patient management advice from a psychiatrist.

OTHER ADGP PRIMARY MENTAL HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES

National Alcohol and Mental Health Comorbidity Project

Managing the Mix: Your Mental Health and Alcohol

The newest initiative under ADGP's mental health program is *Managing the Mix: Your Mental Health and Alcohol*. With extra support from the Rural Health and Palliative Care Branch of the Department of Health and Ageing, ADGP has been able to fund 19 projects, representing 33 Divisions nationwide. The project includes *Better Outcomes* accredited GP education and training, a suite of consumer and carer resources, and a number of local strategies in each Division to enhance the delivery of services for people with comorbid alcohol misuse and high prevalence mental health problems. For more information see:

<http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=3825&filter=i&leca=69&did=41441589>

The Consumer and Carer Resources are now available at

<http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=4202&filter=i&leca=69&did=94632672>

For participating Divisions the *Managing the Mix* Train-the-Trainer Workshops will be held on:

- Perth –Wed and Thurs 13-14 April
- Melbourne – Tues and Wed 3-4 May
- Sydney – Tues and Wed 10-11 May

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS OF INTEREST

Mental Health Election Commitments

The Government will invest an additional \$110 million in mental health with a focus on primary mental health care and reducing the burden of depression. Commencing in 2004-05, the Government will provide additional funding of:

The Government will invest an additional \$110 million in mental health

- \$30 million over 4 years to the *Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care* initiative to address new issues and allow a greater focus on rural and remote primary mental health care;
- \$50 million over 4 years to address mental health, including addiction problems in young people; and
- \$30 million to *beyondblue*, the National Depression Initiative, to address community attitudes, support early intervention and improve services for people with depression.

For more information see: http://www.adgp.com.au/client_images/17185.pdf

ADGP's 2005-06 Budget Submission

Recommendations focused on harnessing the capacity and capabilities of the Divisions

- ADGP's 2005-06 Federal Budget Submission made recommendations focused on harnessing the capacity and capabilities of the Divisions Network to efficiently and effectively assist the Government in delivering major new measures to the community. Our submission highlighted the track record of the Divisions Network in supporting the implementation of *Better Outcomes*, and called for funding to expand allied health services, including a focus on children and adolescents, to put in place appropriate service models for rural and remote communities, and to provide capacity to the Network to continue to drive primary mental health care innovation. See page 13 of the Submission for more recommendations about mental health: http://www.adgp.com.au/site/content.cfm?page_id=3880¤t_category_code=105

Senate Inquiry into Mental Health

The Senate has voted to have an inquiry into mental health.

The Senate has voted to have an inquiry into mental health. The Inquiry, due to report on 6 October 2005, will examine issues such as:

- The extent to which the National Mental Health Strategy has reached its objectives

- The adequacy of prevention, early intervention, acute care, community care, after hours crisis services and respite care for people with a mental illness
- The overrepresentation of people with a mental illness in the criminal justice system detention and the extent to which these environments give rise to mental illness
- The special needs of groups such as children, the aged and Indigenous Australians
- The adequacy of education in de-stigmatising mental illness
- Unmet need in supported accommodation, employment, family and social support services for people with mental illness. ADGP will make a submission to the Inquiry and will consult the Network on its content. Go to http://www.adgp.com.au/client_images/19937.pdf for the full terms of reference.

National Public Health Action Plan for Children 2005-2008

This consultation paper outlines a public health approach and based on the evidence, identifies where the most effective investments can be made to address child health inequalities. It also proposes key action areas to promote and protect the health of children comprising:

1. Strengthening the capacity of parents, families and communities
2. Improving the knowledge and skills of key workers
3. Developing partnerships and mobilising resources
4. Building evidence and tracking progress

For more information and to download an electronic copy see:

http://www.lga.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/CHIP_cons_paper_6_July1.pdf

Based on the evidence, identifies where the most effective investments can be made

New World Health Organisation publications

- Promoting Mental Health: Concepts, Emerging Evidence, Practice. Summary Report (2004) To order email bookorders@who.int or download from:
http://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/en/promoting_mhh.pdf
- Prevention of Mental Health Disorders: Effective Interventions and Policy Options. To order email bookorders@who.int or download from:
http://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/en/Prevention_of_Mental_Disorders.pdf
- Other publications can be found at:
http://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/en/

MJA Supplement

Depression: Reducing the Burden is the topic for the October 2004 MJA supplement sponsored by *beyondblue*. Download from
<http://www.mja.com.au/public/information/supplements.html>.

beyondblue's National Consenting Practitioners' Website List

beyondblue and *bluevoices* are developing a national website listing of mental health practitioners who have either been recommended by consumers or carers or who have been self-referred. For further details please contact Lyn Chaplin on lyn.chaplin@beyondblue.org.au or Phone (03) 9810 6100

beyondblue's Antenatal and Postnatal Guide to Management

beyondblue has produced a guide to management of ante and postnatal depression. The guide includes advice about risk factors, diagnosis, management planning, and referral. To download go to www.beyondblue.org.au.

beyondblue : the national depression initiative 2000-2004

An independent evaluation report of *beyondblue's* first five years concludes that *beyondblue* has contributed significantly to raising the awareness of depression, anxiety and related disorders in Australia and in reducing the stigma associated with these health problems. To download this report go to:

http://www.beyondblue.org.au/index.aspx?link_id=2.398&tmp=FileDownload&fid=128

Clinical Practice Guidelines

The RANZCP has developed six Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs) to provide mental health practitioners, consumers, and carers with evidence-based information about particular mental illnesses and appropriate treatment options. These have been developed with the support of both the Australian and New Zealand Governments. The CPGs address six specific disorders or conditions that have considerable impact on psychiatric practice in Australia and New Zealand, as expressed from both the psychiatric profession and consumers such as anorexia nervosa, bipolar disorder, depression and panic disorder. For each disorder, two guidelines have been developed, one for consumers and carers, and one for mental health clinicians.



For more information and to download electronic copies see:

<http://www.ranzcp.org/publicarea/cpg.asp>

Provide evidence-based information about particular mental illnesses and appropriate treatment options.

Alcohol Handbook for Frontline Workers

This publication may be of interest to Divisions, GPs and practices. The handbook offers frontline workers straightforward, practical information and advice about doing brief intervention for alcohol use. The retail price is \$27.50 per copy (plus \$5.50 postage and packing per order). Order forms and more details are available from Don Keast via e-mail at DKeast@fwahs.nsw.gov.au

Guide to Report Writing

PHCRIS have produced through their Journal Watch: Evidence-based Policy and Practice Research Bulletin an article on report Writing: Process, Principle and Styles. For more information see:

http://www.phcris.org.au/publications/journal_frameset.html

Evaluation of the National Primary Mental Health Care Network

The National Primary Mental Health Care Network, is currently undergoing an independent evaluation

The National Primary Mental Health Care Network, which was established under the National Mental Health Strategy in June 1999, is currently undergoing an independent evaluation. The Network consists of a National Primary Mental Health Coordinator based at ADGP, Primary Mental Health Care Development and Liaison Officers in each SBO and the Primary Mental Health Care Australian Resource Centre based at Flinders University in SA.

All Divisions should have received a survey from the evaluators, Health Management Advisers. Please complete the survey. The results will help shape the support services the National Coordinator and DLOs provide to you in the future.

Release of the new national reports

The 2004 Mental Health Report is the eighth in the National Mental Health Report series and describes Australia's progress over the course of the National Mental Health Strategy between 1993 and 2002. The previous edition (National Mental Health Report 2002) was released in September 2002 and described progress under the Strategy from 1993 to 2000. See: [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/health-pg-mental-pubs.htm/\\$File/NMHR2004_Final_Internet_Release.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/health-pg-mental-pubs.htm/$File/NMHR2004_Final_Internet_Release.pdf) - large file warning

The latest report by the AIHW, *Mental Health Services in Australia, 2002-03*, indicates that GPs are the main providers for people dealing with mental health problems, with over 10 million GP consultations a year for mental health related conditions, with depression accounting for about one-third of mental health problems being managed.

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10101>

When should GPs prescribe SSRIs for adolescent depression?

Recently there has been considerable debate about the use of SSRIs for depression in adolescents. An article addressing this concern has been published in the Australian Family Physician Vol 33, No.12 December 2004. The authors examine the importance of recognising and treating adolescents' depression, methodological issues in research and recommendations for SSRI prescribing by Australian GPs. For more information and to download electronic copies see <http://www.racgp.org.au/folder.asp?id=1104>

Social workers
are now eligible
to work as
mental health
workers

Medicare Plus allied health

Under the *Medicare Plus* allied health initiative, social workers are now eligible to work as mental health workers under the EPC program. The AASW has established a certification process leading to social workers being approved as Medicare providers. The AASW have developed an online

register of Social Workers who have a Medicare provider number and are eligible to practice as a mental Health Worker under the EPC Program. To access the register which is listed by State and or Territory go to http://www.aasw.asn.au/about/prof_practice/mental.htm

UPCOMING EVENTS

MindMatters National Conference – 17-19 March 2005, at the Novotel Brighton Beach Hotel Sydney. The conference includes a pre-conference workshop on MindMatters Plus GP on 17 March. For more information see: http://www.beecoswebengine.org/servlet/Web?s=157573&p=CON_MM05_INTRO

2nd International Conference on Healthy Ageing and Longevity 18 – 20 March 2005 Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. Dr Rob Walters, ADGP Chair will deliver a keynote on mental health and ageing on Sunday 20 March, followed by an ADGP hosted seminar on mental health and ageing. For more information see: www.longevity-international.com

Australian & New Zealand Mental Health Services Conference (TheMHS), Adelaide Convention Centre, SA, 30 August -2 September 2005. For more information see: <http://www.themhs.org/m.aspx?n=CWFYK-YZTKV-IEHNQ-QGJVC-ZYGTJ>

Divisions of General Practice Network Forum 2005, Perth Convention Exhibition Centre, WA, 3rd - 6th November 2005

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