



Australian Divisions of **General Practice**

The fortnightly e-newsletter of the Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

# ADGP News

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## ADGP Board Members

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## CEO'S REPORT - FROM KATE CARNELL

### ADGP/PGA Memorandum of Understanding

There has recently been some publicity concerning the ADGP/Pharmacy Guild of Australia (PGA) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Statements made by the AMA could be regarded as misleading. Dr Mukesh Haikerwal has been quoted as saying "I doubt many GPs, and even grassroots pharmacists, would support any move to substitute general practice care with treatment in pharmacies." It is inferred that the ADGP/PGA MoU encourages this to occur. This is not the case.

The purpose of the MoU is merely to set the ground rules for an ongoing mutually beneficial relationship between ADGP and the PGA.

The draft MoU has been sent out to SBO and Divisions for comment. Where possible, the feedback that we have received will be incorporated into the MoU which will then go back to the PGA and to the ADGP Board for approval.

### Relief Effort in Indonesia

Dr George Somers of Victoria is coordinating a team of medical and nursing volunteers to travel to the Province of Aceh, Indonesia and assist in the restoration of the primary health care services in the region.

Dr Somers is looking for medical and nursing staff willing to come for a 2-week stint, leaving 19 April or 1 May. Airfares would need to be paid for by the volunteer, however they are tax-deductible. Please contact [george.somers@bordnet.com.au](mailto:george.somers@bordnet.com.au) if you are interested in joining the relief effort.

Dr Somers has also requested that GP's who have recently updated their stethoscope, sphygmo, otoscope/ophthalmoscope or digital thermometer; donate any functioning old models to the community health centres of Aceh. This equipment is an essential part of Dr Somers' project, which is aimed at empowering local teams to take over primary health care services.

Divisions are encouraged to coordinate the collection of still-functioning equipment and **send it to ADGP**, who will arrange for the equipment to be shipped to Aceh in due course.

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### Changes to PBS listing of narcotic analgesic preparations

From 1 April 2005, some changes have been made to the PBS restrictions applying to opioid analgesics. These changes were recommended in response to a need to simplify access for GPs managing patients outside the hospital setting.

There has been some debate from GPs as to the 'red tape' indemnity and process issues related to these changes. ADGP will work via the SBOs to understand the issues and put forward any recommendations to the process in conjunction with other GP groups.

The proposed changes are as follows:

- Commencement in hospital (as an inpatient or outpatient) will no longer be a requirement for obtaining an Authority for increased maximum quantities and/or repeats.
- For patients with severe disabling pain associated with proven malignant neoplasia there will no requirement other than to confirm the diagnosis.
- For patients with chronic severe disabling pain, GPs will be required to consult a medical colleague to confirm the clinical need for increased supply.
- Where the authority is requested by a specialist managing a patient with chronic severe disabling pain there is no additional requirement.

The PBS listing of narcotic analgesics now includes a note which states that increased maximum quantities and/or repeats can only be granted in limited circumstances. The changed listing is available <http://www1.health.gov.au/pbs/>. The HIC's Authority Prescriptions Applications Line, 1800 888 333 can also provide details on the restrictions.

### Parliamentary Inquiry into Health Funding

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Ageing has resolved to conduct an inquiry into how the Commonwealth government can take a leading role in improving the efficient and effective delivery of highest-quality health care to all Australians. The Committee will give particular consideration to:

- a) examining the roles and responsibilities of the different levels of government (including local government) for health and related services;
- b) simplifying funding arrangements, and better defining roles and responsibilities, between the different levels of government, with a particular emphasis on hospitals;
- c) considering how and whether accountability to the Australian community for the quality and delivery of public hospitals and medical services can be improved;
- d) how best to ensure that a strong private health sector can be sustained into the future, based on positive relationships between private health funds, private and public hospitals, medical practitioners, other health professionals and agencies in various levels of government; and
- e) while accepting the continuation of the Commonwealth commitment to the 30 per cent and Senior's Private Health Insurance Rebates, and Lifetime Health Cover, identify innovative ways to make private health insurance a still more attractive option to Australians who can afford to take some responsibility for their own health cover.

The Committee invites submissions addressing the terms of reference by **6 May 2005**. For more information, visit the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/haa/healthfunding/index.htm>

## NATIONAL PROGRAM UPDATES

### Review Implementation Committee Update

Andrew Waters relocated to Canberra on 30 April to take up the role with ADGP supporting the Divisions Network in embracing the reforms proposed from the RIC. Andrew's contact details are as follows:

Telephone: 02 6228 0849 (direct) or 02 6228 0800  
Mobile: 0429 899 660  
Email: [awaters@adgp.com.au](mailto:awaters@adgp.com.au)

Please email or telephone if you have any questions or comments on the Divisions review implementation processes, direction or targets.

### **Multi-program funding agreement (draft)**

Your STO should have provided you with the “exposure draft” of the 2005-08 Multi-Program funding agreement with a covering letter. If you have not received it you should contact your STO as soon as possible. Feedback to the STO is requested by **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2005**.

### **Legal Advice**

ADGP has received on behalf of Divisions, the first draft of a legal opinion on the draft funding agreement. SBOs have emailed this to all Divisions today for their consideration.

### **The New Financial Reporting Template**

The workshop for SBO finance staff is scheduled for Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April. This will be held in Canberra and led by David Williams from QDGP. If you have specific questions on the financial reporting template please contact your SBO prior to **Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April**. SBOs will be a source of support for Divisions with regard to this template. Note that your completed financial template is due with your STO by **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April**.

### **The New Planning and Reporting Template**

Setting a date for the workshops on the Planning and Reporting template for SBOs is a priority. It will enable SBO staff to support Divisions in the completion of the planning document. All Divisions should have received the publication *Future Directions: Your toolkit for Implementation*. This provides information on creating and completing your Division's Annual Plan for 05/06. Along with the Financial Reporting template, this is due with your STO by **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April**. Contact your SBO or Andrew Waters at ADGP if you have specific concerns or questions regarding these documents.

### **Quality Improvement (and accreditation)**

When are you going to take this up? To be eligible for the “early adopter” \$5,000 incentive payment, you must be able to provide evidence of your contractual engagement with one of the three recognised providers (ACHS, ISO or QIC) by no later than 15<sup>th</sup> June. You should have received correspondence about this from your STO. If you don't wish to take this offer, your organisation will need to be enrolled with a provider for 2007/08.

### **Informing your board, staff and Division partners**

The CD with the presentations from the information sessions should also be made available to Divisions shortly. You'll find a place for it in your “Future Directions...” toolkit. This will provide information to enable Divisions to inform board members, staff and Divisions of General Practice regional partners and stakeholders.

### **RIC Newsletter**

These will be published fortnightly for the next two months or so aiming to provide updates on RIC developments and progress; tips and hints. The first Newsletter is available on the ADGP website at [http://www.adgp.com.au/client\\_images/20556.pdf](http://www.adgp.com.au/client_images/20556.pdf).

### **RIC Communiqué**

The communiqué for the RIC meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> March is available on the ADGP website at [http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?PageMode=indiv&module=NEWS&page\\_id=4317](http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?PageMode=indiv&module=NEWS&page_id=4317).

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## **Aged Care MoU developed under Aged Care GP Panels Initiative**

The Sutherland Division of General Practice has launched an Aged Care Memorandum of Understanding. This document clearly defines the complementary roles and responsibilities of general practitioners and residential aged care facilities to facilitate quality outcomes for residents living in aged care homes.

The Aged Care MoU is an acknowledgement of the importance of integrated care and aims to strengthen partnerships between GPs and RACFs. Whilst the document is not a legal or binding contract, it provides a framework which sets out the expertise and mutual commitment of both parties in the following areas:

- Communication
- Clinical Assessment and Management
- Medication Management
- Documentation
- Consent

- Medical Care, After-Hours, Public Holidays and Periods of Leave
- Advance Care Directives / Treatment Plans
- Extinction of Life
- Complaints / Conflict Resolution
- Quality
- Professional Ethics

The Aged Care MoU has been developed in consultation with local GPs, representatives from RACFs, Aged & Community Services Association of NSW (ACSA) and the Aged Care Association NSW, formerly ANHECA.

For further information contact Janine Lundie, Aged Care Program Officer at Sutherland Division of General Practice on (02) 9525 4011 or [jlundie@shiregps.org.au](mailto:jlundie@shiregps.org.au). A copy of the document can be downloaded from <http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=2496#sdgp>

## International Conference on Health Ageing and Longevity

The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Healthy Ageing and Longevity was held recently at the Brisbane Convention Centre. ADGP organised two sessions: *General Practice Intervention in Healthy Ageing from Birth* and *The Primary Care Team: Promoting Mental Health and Well being in Older Australians*.

Both presentations were well attended and have received positive feedback. Please contact Debbie Bampton, Principal Adviser – Aged Care for more information on [dbampton@adgp.com.au](mailto:dbampton@adgp.com.au).

## CONFERENCES AND COURSES

### Divisions of General Practice Network Forum 2005

If you are interested in attending the Forum this year, or would like information about sponsorship or exhibition opportunities, please register an Expression of Interest via the Forum website at:

<http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=4156&filter=i&leca=16&did=96592436>.

Alternatively, email [adgp@con-sol.com](mailto:adgp@con-sol.com) or contact Conference Solutions on 02 6285 3000.

### National Forum on Practice Capacity for Chronic Disease Management

#### **Mercure, Sydney Airport, Friday 15 April 2005**

What kind of organisation, systems and links with other services does general practice need to support chronic disease care in general practice? How can the Divisions, professional organisations and government policies help build this capacity?

This one day forum draws on patient and GP experience, the research outcomes from the "Practice Capacity for Chronic Disease Care" study conducted by the Centre for GP Integration Studies, UNSW/University of Adelaide, and other advances in the field to answer these questions.

For program information and to obtain a registration form, see the ADGP website at: [http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=306&PageMode=indiv&page\\_id=4069](http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=306&PageMode=indiv&page_id=4069).

### Stroke Recovery and Rehabilitation, 4-5 August

The National Stroke Foundation would like to invite general practitioners working throughout Australia to attend a conference launching the new National Clinical Guidelines for Stroke Recovery and Rehabilitation. The conference will be held on the 4th and 5th of August 2005 in Melbourne.

This conference will provide participants with an overview of the evidence base for stroke recovery and rehabilitation. Participants will also attend workshops in which they can discuss how to put the guideline recommendations into clinical practice. Participants will earn CPD points for their attendance, subject to our application to the RACGP.

For further information, please contact Mr. Kelvin Hill at [kelvin@strokefoundation.com.au](mailto:kelvin@strokefoundation.com.au) or call the National Stroke Foundation on (03) 9670 1000.

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## Member Retention and Recruitment Workshop

Don't go anywhere! The membership experts are coming to you! Membership Bootcamp 2005 gives you the opportunity to: Learn the member recruitment and retention secrets of the experts; share practical ideas and advice that you can implement in your organisation immediately; and receive the latest information on recruitment and retention techniques. This one day information-packed workshop is essential for any membership professional.

Membership Bootcamp Roadshow ([www.membershipbootcamp.com.au](http://www.membershipbootcamp.com.au)) will be coming to: **Perth** - Monday 11 April 2005, **Melbourne** - Wednesday 13 April 2005, **Sydney** - Friday 15 April 2005, **Brisbane** - Tuesday 19 April 2005.

Call Renee Nugent, from **Not-For-Profit Network** on 07 3210 2288 or email [renee@nfpn.com.au](mailto:renee@nfpn.com.au) for more information.

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## Managing Pain Using Self-Management Approaches, 19 August

The Department of Health and Ageing's Sharing Health Care Initiative is pleased to provide preliminary notification for the *Managing Pain Using Self-Management Approaches: Evidence and Implementation* half-day workshop on 19 August 2005 in Sydney. Speakers at the Workshop will provide the latest research and evidence for Chronic Condition Self-Management in Australia and internationally.

Who should attend: GPs and Divisions of General Practice, nurses, allied health professionals, Aboriginal health workers, health provider organisations, consumers, health insurance policy makers, and health trainers and educationists.

**International speaker:** Professor Kate Lorig, Stanford Patient Education Research Center, United States of America.

Registration: \$100 per delegate, at <http://www.dconferences.com.au/pinp2005>

For more information, please visit the Sharing Health Care Initiative website at <http://www.chronicdisease.health.gov.au>.

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## General Practice Education Convention, 24-25 August

GPET invites all those involved in General Practice education and training to consider submitting an abstract for the 2005 National General Practice Education Convention to be held in Sydney on 24-25 August. The theme of this year's Convention is 'Great Training, Great Medicine, Great Life'.

More information is available via the following link – select GPET 2005 National Convention.  
<http://www.abcon.biz/UpcomingConferences.html>

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## USEFUL INFORMATION FROM BEYOND THE NETWORK

### Rural Medical Infrastructure Fund

The Rural Medical Infrastructure Fund (RMIF) initiative was announced in the 2005 Coalition election commitments, and commences on 1 July 2005. The Initiative is being managed by the Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOTARS), which will be working in close collaboration with DoHA.

Guidelines and assessment criteria are due to be released in May. Total funds available are \$5 million per year over 3 years, but at this stage no ceiling has been set on how much funding can be applied for.

The funds can be used for a variety of "infrastructure", including transport, possibly housing / other facilities, IT etc., depending on community need/support and proposed rationale. In all cases the fundholder will be the local council who can apply on behalf of a consortium of a number of local groups. Suggested key partners are: health / medical agencies, community groups, local governments, state/territory governments, area consultative committees, Australian government bodies etc.

Funds will be allocated on the basis of:

- Community need (rather than state by state allocation) but there must be evidence of strong community support for the proposed program
- Evidence of collaboration and strong, ongoing working relationships between relevant services / project partners
- Evidence of contribution/ commitment from project partners (this can be in kind support, it does not just have to be financial)
- Evidence of a sustainability plan
- Capability of applicant

Further information is available from:  
Des Harris (DOTARS)  
[des.harris@dotars.gov.au](mailto:des.harris@dotars.gov.au)  
Ph: 02 6274 8063 mob: 0409 361 030

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## Costs of Diabetes in Australia

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has released a new report today:

### **Costs of Diabetes in Australia, 2000-01**

AIHW Catalogue No. AUS-59; Available from CanPrint (Ph: 1300 889 873); \$10.00

Diabetes Mellitus is estimated to affect around one million Australians, a number that is likely to increase in the future because of population ageing and increasing prevalence of risk factors such as obesity. This report mainly focuses on direct health care expenditure for diabetes - that is, money spent by governments, private health insurers, companies, households and individuals to prevent, diagnose and treat diabetes.

Click on the link to view the [media release](#) and the [report](#).

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## Free Argus Software and Support for GPs

ArgusConnect will provide GPs with free helpdesk support for their Argus software. Argus, a freeware solution, enables secure transfer of clinical information between healthcare providers.

The new support service is a further bonus to GPs, following the release last year of Argus as freeware to GPs. ArgusConnect has expanded its services with enhancement of the support desk capability, establishment of a dedicated Software Testing Laboratory and the instigation of formalised QA processes.

The Argus software product was developed in response to a growing demand from GPs and other healthcare providers for a secure and safe means of sending documents to each other electronically. GPs will also receive free upgrades of Argus products as part of the new helpdesk support service.

The product is easily installed on a doctor's computer and communicates via the Internet in conjunction with the GP's clinical software. It provides facilities to send information such as letters, referrals, pathology requests and other GP transactions to healthcare providers in a secure, reliable way.

For more information on the free helpdesk support service please call ArgusConnect on 03 5335 2220.

## ABS Profiles Help Local Communities

Businesses, organisations and individuals can now get five years of key economic and social information about their local area, easily, free-of-charge and in one location - on the [Australian Bureau of Statistics website](#).

The ABS has expanded its National Regional Profile to provide five years of data spanning 1999 to 2003. It has also added indicators, including source of income, motor vehicle sales, and the value of agricultural production.

## POSITIONS VACANT

### Medical Superintendent – Queensland Health

#### Mareeba Hospital, Tablelands Health Service District

An exciting opportunity exists in far north Queensland for a general practitioner with procedural and administrative skills, who wishes to expand horizons in rural medicine. Comprehensive education programs, and collegiate working relationships with GP divisions, James Cook University (JCU), visiting specialists, and a multidisciplinary work team are offered. A teaching role is encouraged and Mareeba Hospital participates in undergraduate and postgraduate training schemes. Administratively, the successful applicant will participate in district planning and decision-making as well as managing the medical services and workforce at Mareeba Hospital. (Applications will remain current for 12 months).

Package will include:

- Accommodation and power
- Locality allowance
- Private use of fully maintained vehicle
- Communications package
- Study and conference leave
- Employer contribution to superannuation
- Annual leave loading
- Professional indemnity cover
- Salary packaging is available for approved applicants

Mareeba is a thriving community situated on the Atherton Tablelands, about one hour's drive west of Cairns. The Tablelands is well known for its mild tropical climate - cool summer nights and mild and sunny winter days, but without the high percentage of humidity experienced in coastal areas.

VRN: TD012-05.

Remuneration value up to \$202 031 p.a.

Classification : MS-4

Enquiries: Alison Faigniez (07) 4091 0279.

Application Kit: (07) 4092 9314 or

email: [td\\_recruitment@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:td_recruitment@health.qld.gov.au)

Closing Date: 5.00 p.m. **Monday, 16 May 2005.**

## CONTACT THE EDITOR

Information in this newsletter is for the use and benefit of all members of SBOs and Divisions, so please pass it on, and recycle the whole, or parts, of this publication to your members with due acknowledgement to ADGP.

If SBOs, Divisions and other readers have information for, or comments on, ADGP News please contact Angela Nagy on 02 6228 0833 or e-mail [anagy@adgp.com.au](mailto:anagy@adgp.com.au)

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