



Australian Divisions of **General Practice**

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ADGP News

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CEO'S REPORT – FROM KATE CARNELL

The Divisions Network has been very active over the last fortnight, with the SA/NT Divisions Conference, WA Divisions Forum and NSW Alliance Vital Links Forum all held within the last two weeks of May. Several ADGP staff, including myself, presented at these events, and others attended. All three conferences were stimulating and productive, and I appreciate the positive approach taken by participants from Divisions and SBOs. Such forums greatly assist the Network in consolidating its strengths and common vision, and meeting challenges head on.

Across the Tasman, Rob Walters, Liesel Wett and Leanne Wells represented ADGP at the IPAC Conference. From all reports it was a highly successful event. The meetings between Divisions representatives and NZ IPAs, such as Pegasus Health, were particularly useful as forums for the exchange of ideas and initiatives. Rob, Liesel and Leanne definitely came away with a greater insight into the NZ context and the divisions system of our near neighbour.

At the national level, Liesel Wett, Leanne Wells and I continued our post-budget lobbying efforts, meeting with relevant government and political leaders to reinforce the case that the Divisions Network is an excellent vehicle for cost-effective roll-out health-care programs.

I met with Health Minister Tony Abbott MP and his staff to discuss a range of issues of significance to the Network, including ADGP's proposal for e-health in general practice, primary health-care funding and new item numbers for practice nurses and chronic disease. It is pleasing that the Minister is always more than happy to give ADGP a hearing.

The Review Implementation Committee continued its work, with a meeting in Sydney. For details of the agenda and RIC developments please see the latest RIC News.

To cap off the fortnight, the ADGP-SBO Coalition met on 26-27 May. Coalition members discussed a range of current issues, including relations with DoHA and Network structure and operations. SBOs are united in their commitment to work for the future good of the Divisions Network. All present agree that the Network is moving toward a new era and that our energies are best spent on developing a positive and viable vision for the future.

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PROGRAM NEWS

Australia's 2003 Communicable Diseases report releases

National immunisation programs have significantly reduces the rate of preventable diseases in Australia, while the number of reported sexually-acquired infections continued to increase, according to a national disease surveillance report released last week.

The 2003 Annual Report of the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance Scheme, released by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, documents a number of successes in national immunization programs that have produced significant reductions in disease. Copies of the report are available from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing's website at:

[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/cda-cdi2901-pdf-cnt.htm/\\$FILE/cdi2901.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/cda-cdi2901-pdf-cnt.htm/$FILE/cdi2901.pdf)

CONFERENCES AND COURSES



Divisions of General Practice Network Forum 2005

Perth Convention Exhibition Centre, 3-6 November 2005

REGISTRATION – early bird closes 1 August 2005

Registration is now available on-line via the Forum website at <http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=4527>

CALL FOR PAPERS & POSTERS – closes 30 June 2005

There are a number of opportunities at the Forum during the concurrent sessions for members of the Divisions Network and related organisations to present papers, conduct workshops or give poster presentations on key program and policy areas. These sessions will enable the demonstration of major program and research findings that may contribute to policy development.

Papers and Workshops

The Steering Committee invites abstracts from Divisions and other organisations wishing to present a paper or conduct a workshop during a concurrent session. Abstracts are invited under each of the 5 key Forum streams:

Stream 1: Primary Health Care Policy

Stream 2: Division Performance

Stream 3: Supporting Quality and Evidence-based Care

Stream 4: Improving Access to Primary Health Care

Stream 5: Promoting Prevention and Early Intervention

Poster Display and Presentations

The Divisions Showcase Poster Display and poster presentation sessions provide another opportunity to highlight the range of outstanding work and successful programs being undertaken by Divisions and related organisations. All poster submissions received will be included in the Poster Display in the Trade Exhibition Hall.

Selected poster authors will be invited give a 5 minute presentation/discussion about their poster during the concurrent poster presentation on Saturday afternoon at the Forum. Abstracts for Papers and Posters must be submitted online via the Forum website at <http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=4410> by 30 June 2005.

If you have any difficulties accessing the website or abstract submission area, please contact the Conference Secretariat at adgp@con-sol.com or Jill Masters on 02 6285 3000.

DIVISIONS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2005 – nominations close 1 September 2005

The aim of the Divisions Achievement Awards is to recognise Divisions for their achievements in everyday Divisional activities. The Awards are an opportunity to celebrate excellence and innovation and encourage on-going improvements in Divisions in their delivery of primary care services.

The 2005 Divisions Achievement Awards will be awarded during the National Divisions Forum in each of the following categories:

- Improving Division Performance
- Supporting Quality in General Practice
- Improving Access to Primary Health Care
- Promoting Prevention and Early Intervention
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Special Award Categories:

- Best Division Website
- Best Division Newsletter

Nominations can be either self-nominated or nominated by an external organisation via the Forum website at <http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=2468>.

For more information please contact the Forum Secretariat on 02 6285 3000 or adgp@con-sol.com

Health Systems, Services and Strife The 4th Health Services and Policy Research Conference National Convention Centre, Canberra, 13-16 November 2005

The scope of "Health Systems, Services and Strife" is primary, secondary and tertiary health services. The deadline for papers is 30 June. Categories include health system comparisons; health outcomes; assessing and improving value from health services; and regulation and risk. The conference will provide opportunities for researchers, policymakers, clinicians and professionals to meet and share their knowledge and experiences on future directions for health services research.

For more information please go to www.healthservicesconference.com.au

Heart Disease Prevention Conference: Challenging Practices...Broadening Horizons Fremantle, Western Australia, 3-4 August 2005

The organising committee for the 15th Annual Scientific Meeting and Exhibition of the Australian Cardiac Rehabilitation Association invites health professionals interested in attending this conference to view up to date program details at <http://www.promaco.com.au/conference/2005/acra>

For more information email promaco@promaco.com.au or ring 08 9332 2900.

Getting research right for policy and practice Adelaide Convention Centre, 26-28 July 2005

Early bird registrations for the 2005 General Practice & Primary Health Care Conference close on June 6. From then fees jump from the discounted \$385 to \$485. International speakers at the conference include Professor Jonathan Lomas (Canada) and Professor Michael Quinn Patton (USA). To view the preliminary program and/or register go to http://www.phcris.org.au/events/conference_frameset.html

Health Outcomes: Making a Difference Rydges Lakeside, Canberra, 17-18 August 2005

The conference program for Health Outcomes 2005 is now available at;
<http://www.uow.edu.au/commerce/ahoc/program2005.pdf>

USEFUL INFORMATION

Round the Clock Medicare grants

Grants for after-hours general practice are being offered under the Australian Government's Round the Clock Medicare: Investing in After-Hours GP Services program. Grants available include recurrent operating subsidies, start-up grants, and supplementary grants.

Applications must be received by COB 18 July 2005. Late applications will not be accepted. Interested applicants must address the selection criteria outlined in the application pack, available at www.health.gov.au/tenders.

Rural Private Access Program

The Department of Health and Ageing is seeking funding applications from providers of privately insurable health services and other interested parties currently delivering or wanting to such services to rural and remote areas. The RPA Program aims to assist the viability of rural private hospitals and support and increase the range of privately insurable health services in rural, regional and remote Australia. The total funding available for the second funding round is approximately \$10 million. The maximum funding for individual projects \$500,000. Projects funded under the program can be undertaken over a number of years but must be completed by 1 May 2008. Funding for all projects will be one-off and non-recurrent.

Applications close on 29 July, 2005. To obtain a copy of the application kit call 02 6289 3694 or email rpa@health.gov.au or visit <http://www.health.gov.au/tenders>

DoctorConnect website

The DoctorConnect website was launched recently and can be accessed at <http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au/>. The website is a national information and referral service for Overseas Trained Doctors (OTDs) which promotes Australia as a place to work as a doctor and provides OTDs (off-shore and on-shore) and their potential employers easy access to relevant information, including contacts, forms, and answers to frequently asked questions. Information about Divisions and a link to ADGP is also provided at the site.

In producing the site, the Department of Health and Ageing consulted with a range of key stakeholder groups. The site includes an ongoing feedback facility, and comments and suggestions are welcome. As a web-based facility, the site is open to anyone. In keeping with the Melbourne Manifesto (2002) the site will not, however, be actively marketed in developing countries.

For further information about the site please contact ryates@adgp.com.au

Consultations on electronic signatures policy

The Department of Health & Ageing is seeking to develop a policy on the use of electronic signatures in relation to current prescribing and dispensing processes. Trilogy Information Solutions has been engaged to document current prescribing and dispensing processes within all healthcare settings in Australia, along with opportunities for electronic signatures to support the electronic prescribing and dispensing of medicines.

As part of the consultation process, models of current prescribing and dispensing work processes will be on the Internet from 30 May through to 17 June, 2005. The Department recognizes that the views of prescribers are essential in informing sound policies in this area.

To view the models please go to <http://www.trilogy.com/prescribing&dispensing.htm>

Rural Health Education Foundation broadcast timetable

RHEF has released a timetable with details of upcoming broadcasts. Topics include injury prevention in Aboriginal communities and paediatric gastroenteritis. RHEF programs can also be purchased as videos.

To view the timetable please go to <http://www.rhef.com.au/timetable/timetable.html>

GP Re-entry program

The Department of Health and Ageing has provided funding to General Practice Education and Training (GPET) for a GP re-entry program as part of the Strengthening Medicare initiative. The re-entry program uses the regionalised infrastructure provided by general practice Regional Training Providers to provide training at a local level.

The aim of the program is to encourage qualified general practitioners who may not currently be working in general practice, or are working up to three sessions per week only, to re-enter or increase their workload in general practice. The biggest issue with regard to this program is "spreading the word".

The aim is to try and get information to eligible GPs so that, after receiving information about the program, re-entry can be seen as a viable option for them. The SBOs of the Divisions of General Practice will be contacted in the near future and asked to distribute an electronic brochure which has been developed about the program asking them to forward this to their divisions.

Further information or copies of the brochure are available by contacting Stephanie McAlister at GPET (stephanie.mcalister@gpet.com.au) or via telephone: 02 6263 6777.

SEEKING.... REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Regular GPs

The SA Division of General Practice is seeking a document/brochure aimed at the general public which promotes the value of having a regular GP. Jill Poulton, GP Registry, Program Support Officer, SADI, would welcome any information about whether such a resource exists/where it can be found.

Anyone with information should contact Jill on 08 8271 8988.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

GPs indicate they are team players

Australian Doctor reports that there is “widespread enthusiasm among GPs for multidisciplinary primary care teams” according to a survey of 100 GPs (26 May, *Australian Doctor*).

The poll, conducted by market research company Foresearch, “suggests that doctors are happy to embrace the changes that academics and GPS groups say are need to tackle the rising tide of chronic disease and an ageing population”. The survey found that there was even some support among GPs for prescribing by allied health professionals. Thirty-one per cent of GPS thought multidisciplinary teams should be used in the care of all patients, while a further 44 per cent believed they should be used for selected groups of patients, such as those with chronic disease. When GPs were asked who should make up a primary care team, practice nurses came out on top (88 per cent), followed by psychologists (84 per cent), physiotherapists (82 per cent) and dietitians (78 per cent).

Defending ADGP's role

Dr Rob Walters wrote a clear defence of ADGP's coordinating and advocacy role for *Australian Doctor* (18 May). The article can be downloaded from the ADGP website at

http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?PageMode=indiv&module=NEWS&page_id=4577

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 Jane Castles on 02 6228 0822 or e-mail jcastles@adgp.com.au if you wish to be added or removed from the ADGP News distribution list, please let us know via e-mail to jcastles@adgp.com.au.

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