



NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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GPs – A VITAL PART OF THE SOLUTION TO QUALITY MENTAL HEALTH CARE

The Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP) has today welcomed many of the recommendations contained in *Not For Service*, a report of consultations by the Mental Health Council of Australia and the Brain and Mind Research Institute in association with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

ADGP Chair Dr Rob Walters particularly welcomed the recommendation that action needs to be taken to boost the capacity of the mental health workforce.

Dr Walters says, "It is a myth to think that people with a mental health problem are treated by specialist services – there is simply not the access. The great majority of the mental health care in this country is delivered by GPs"

"GPs can play a major role in supporting a strong primary mental health care system through team-based care supported with education and training in mental health and improved access to support from allied health professionals such as psychologists and specialist providers such as psychiatrists."

"For the last four years, the Australian Divisions of General Practice have been leading the implementation of the highly successful *Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care Initiative*" said ADGP CEO, Ms Kate Carnell.

"As a result of Divisions embracing this initiative, we now have over 1 in 5 GPs with extra training in mental health."

"These services are not only reaching high-need consumers, such as those on low incomes, but are also providing services to those that would otherwise fallen through the primary health care safety net"

Ms Carnell said the national network of Divisions of General Practice was "uniquely placed to deliver better mental health outcomes".

"Through Divisions we have been able to introduce primary mental health services into rural and regional communities. In many of these areas, public mental health services are under strain or don't exist, psychiatrists are in short supply, so general practice and Division-run services are often the only port of call"

"ADGP would welcome even further expansion of this successful initiative".

For more information please call Kate Carnell, ADGP Chief Executive Officer, on 0415 662 266.

WHAT IS ADGP?

- ADGP is the peak body representing 119 Divisions of General Practice and eight State-based organisations (SBOs) around Australia. The Divisions Network supports general practice and their practice teams and drives the implementation of innovative health strategies.
- ADGP, through the Divisions Network, works to integrate general practice with other sectors of the health system, both government and non-government, to deliver high quality care to the Australian community.
- ADGP is committed to promoting the health of all Australians by supporting the role of Divisions in the nation's primary health care system.



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