



NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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GP's supporting the mental health of Australia's young people

The Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP) today launched the MindMatters Plus GP resource kit and website, that will assist GPs and primary care teams better support the mental health of young people.

ADGP Chair, Dr Rob Walters said that for too long young people have only seen their GP as a point of help for their physical health problems, rather than the full range, which includes both physical and mental health issues.

"Like school teachers, GPs are well placed to pick up whether a young person is struggling emotionally, is at risk of developing a mental health disorder, or is, in fact, already exhibiting the symptoms of a mental health problem and to do something about it".

"Through this initiative, the young people involved in MindMatters Plus GP are now more aware of just how important a link general practice can be. They are realising that they can talk confidentially to their GP about their mental health and emotional problems, and that there are options for help"

Scott Schmutter, a student from Walcha Central School, said "Having GPs and schools work together has increased students confidence, resilience and their general ability to relate to and understand others. Both students and staff now feel more competent in their abilities to recognise early symptoms associated with mental illnesses and to get help for people."

"MindMatters Plus GP bridges the gap between schools and general practice to provide networks of care for students with high mental health support needs"

MindMatters Plus GP is part of Australia's MindMatters mental health promotion program for schools. ADGP has managed the MindMatters Plus GP in conjunction with partners from the Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council and the Australian Guidance and Counsellors Association.

Twenty-three demonstration Divisions of General Practice nation-wide have been involved in MindMatters Plus GP. Divisions have worked in partnership with schools to increase their capacity to provide support for students with high mental health needs; promote referral pathways and networks of care for at-risk young people; and to identify priorities for future national action in terms of the school/community and primary care interface.

The MindMatters Plus GP resource kit and website will provide Divisions, GPs, schools, other health professionals, parents and young people with information to enhance the support provided to young people with high mental health support needs.

An electronic version can be found at <http://www.adgp.com.au/site/index.cfm?display=2509>

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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