



NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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AMWAC Report – Disappointing – the solution is not about numbers

This is a disappointing report. The recommendations state the obvious with broad facts that are well known. The report falls short on its terms of reference, particularly the provision of advice to AMWAC about best practice models of care.

ADGP CEO Kate Carnell said “While we applaud the Australian Government for increasing the number of places in medical schools, the solution can never be just about numbers. We need clever, innovative thinking, with strategies that include new models of primary health care delivery.”

The report indicates that Australia will need between 1100 and 1200 new general practitioners **every year** by 2007. Currently about 700 GPs enter the workforce annually. Even with the expansion of medical school numbers it will be impossible to meet this target due to the increasing competition from other specialties and the international doctor shortage.

Ms Carnell said “Australia **must** look at different models of primary health care delivery including self help, early intervention and the use of general practice-based multidisciplinary teams with GPs as essential members.”

In the AMWAC summary document it would appear that there has only been a cursory consideration of how other primary care providers and GPs could work together to better respond to community need.

“We know that systems which rely more on primary health care and general practice than on specialist and hospital care are more efficient, cost effective, and accessible and result in healthier Australians,” Ms Carnell said.

“An opportunity has been lost to recommend some systematic solutions to AHMAC.

“Workforce is on the national agenda through COAG and we look forward to COAG’s consideration of the Productivity Commission report on health workforce due out in December along with this AMWAC Report.

“Our Primary Health Care Position Statement and budget submission calls for a number of measures to build and sustain the team such as an expansion of Medicare item numbers for practice nurses and support for other allied health professionals.

“The Divisions of General Practice Network is a uniquely placed infrastructure that can help deliver the solutions. ADGP urges more effective use of the Divisions Network to address the workforce crisis.

“Divisions are connected with general practice and are well placed in their communities to conduct workforce needs analysis and planning, to locally deliver health workforce support programs. Divisions can hold funds for the delivery of specific programs including the employment of allied health professionals with specific expertise in order to build and support primary health care teams and to overcome one of the most vexing issues in the health sector – dealing with different funding streams from different levels of government.”

For more information call Kate Carnell 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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