



NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

14 November 2005

World Diabetes Day

Amongst the messages at this time of year urging us to 'tone up for summer', World Diabetes day provides a timely reminder to think about how lifestyles can affect health.

Lifestyle behaviours are the largest group of preventable risk factors for death and disease in Australia. Patients are now receiving a new style of prescription from their GP. The *Lifescrpts* initiative assists GPs to give personalised advice in the form of a lifestyle prescription and provide support to patients on quitting smoking, eating healthier food, drinking alcohol safely, exercising more and achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.

"Encouraging healthier lifestyles to prevent chronic disease will save in treatment costs for the health system over the long term" said Ms Carnell.

The Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP) and the Divisions Network is supporting general practice to provide high quality care for patients with diabetes and other chronic diseases, and through *Lifescrpts* to prevent chronic conditions by promoting healthier lifestyles.

A new suite of Medicare items are now available for GPs to manage the care of people with diabetes including the Chronic Disease item numbers and the Diabetes cycle of care. During July and August this year 12,491 Medicare items were claimed for people who completed a diabetes cycle of care. In the same period of time GPs provided management plans for 53,872 patients with chronic diseases (including diabetes) and 11,610 team care arrangements which include other allied health professionals such as dieticians.

Ms Carnell said "Prevention is always better than cure.

"I encourage the Government to develop and implement new Medicare items for evidence-based preventative health checks for the whole population. This will assist general practice in moving towards a wellness oriented system that helps prevent chronic disease such as diabetes, or at the very least diagnosis in the early states so that people can have access to appropriate support and treatment. Early intervention can help avert longer-term complications from diabetes such as blindness and circulatory problems"

Dr Rob Walters (ADGP's immediate past Chair) will be discussing *Lifescrpts* and healthy lifestyles on 'Mornings with Kerri Anne Kennerley' (Channel Nine) on Tuesday 15 November 2005.

For more information please call Kate Carnell, ADGP CEO, 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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