



# NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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## Put your new years resolution into action

Starting out the New Year with the best intentions to eat well, loose weight, exercise more and cut back on alcohol is the way many Australians begin each New Year. How successful we are throughout the year is often a different picture. Talking with your GP about healthy lifestyles can help you transform those new years' resolutions into actions for the rest of the year.

The Lifescripts 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.

Lifestyle behaviours are the largest group of preventable risk factors for death and disease in Australia. GPs provided education and counselling on weight and nutrition in 1.5 million more consultations over 2004-05 than in 1998 according to a report on General Practice Activity in Australia 2004-05 by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

"Engaging in healthier lifestyles will help to prevent or slow down the onset of chronic diseases, save in treatment costs for the health system over the long term and help people to live healthier, happier lives" said Ms Carnell, CEO of ADGP.

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

"ADGP supports general practice engaging in preventative health care. We know that a wellness oriented, primary health care system with general practice in a pivotal role can deliver better health outcomes for patients" said Ms Kate Carnell.

"I encourage the Government to develop and implement new Medicare items for evidence-based preventative health checks for the whole population and to recognise the important role of primary care in preventative health care by funding Lifescripts for another two years" said Ms Carnell.

Of patients attending general practice consultations around half are overweight or obese, about 1 in 5 are smokers, two-thirds do less than recommended physical activity levels and one fifth drink alcohol at risky levels. Lifescripts provides a nationally consistent approach to promoting healthier lifestyles.

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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