



# NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

10 February 2006

## Divisions of General Practice – the engine room for COAG directions

The Australian Divisions of General Practice has welcomed COAG's collaboration and renewed vision for health.

Kate Carnell, ADGP, CEO said "It is encouraging that COAG have given priority to prevention and early intervention, health workforce and the link between health and broader social and economic outcomes for the community.

"The test will be how the Commonwealth and states implement these sentiments. What is lacking in this debate is the commitment to a primary health care policy and a practical strategy to create a more robust primary health care system".

"We know primary care-led systems achieve better outcomes and contain cost. Investing more in primary health care is not only good for health, it is good for the community and good for the economy".

"ADGP's *Primary Health Care Position Statement* and *2006-07 Federal Budget submission* set out a number of measures that will improve the health system and address some of the key policy conundrums policy makers face such as workforce shortage, pressures on the mental health system and the poor advances in indigenous health.

"Medicare incentives for preventative checks to keep patients healthy, national implementation of *Lifescrpts* and expansion of practice nurse incentives should be central to a prevention agenda.

Ms Carnell added, "Sustainable multidisciplinary teams are part of the solution to Australia's health workforce problems. We need incentives that take us away from traditional models of financing health care to models that reward team-based care. We also need an incentive scheme for practice amalgamation, co-location and expansion.

"A focus on child health must be central to an early intervention agenda. Good child development, support for parents and support for the health professionals that deliver vital services to families is a solid down payment for later health and prosperity" said ADGP Dr Jenny Thomson.

"However, change is so often confounded by the shared responsibilities for health across governments and protracted negotiations between governments. A primary health care strategy and the Divisions of General Practice network is the obvious mechanism for driving change and rolling out any new proposals.

"Governments can be confident that the Network's coverage, capacity, and consistency can deliver. We are a network of 118 organisations and eight state based agencies, employing over 1,500 people, representing 95% of GPs and linking GPs with other parts of the health system. We engage with practices everyday and already administer a range of primary health care programs that are making a difference to communities"

We urge Commonwealth and State officials use us as their preferred provider of health promotion and primary health care services to local communities right across Australia.

**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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