



NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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\$1.5bn injection for mental health care – a step in the right direction

Kate Carnell, ADGP, CEO said “Mental health is one of the most important health issues in the country presently. It is an issue that truly spans the health, social and economic agendas of governments and a \$1.5bn injection into the system will no doubt improve service delivery.

“But we need a significant ongoing investment in dollar terms and a steadfast commitment by all governments to make sure the mental health system is accessible for those who are in most need.

Today ADGP released its submission to the Commonwealth Health Interdepartmental Committee

recommending a \$450 million, 3-point package over 4 years that focuses on prevention, early intervention and recovery to support those at risk, experiencing early onset or on discharge from hospital:

- \$194 million over 4 years to continue and expand *MindMatters* in Australian secondary schools and introduce a primary schools program and to implement a national initiative to support parents of children and young people based on the Triple P Positive Parenting Program
- A minimum of \$220 million over 4 years to expand access to psychological services (ATAPS) and introduce a primary care placement scheme for GPs and intern psychologists and other allied health professionals under the *Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care* program
- \$35.4 million over 4 years for a regional network of Community Coordinators based locally in Divisions of General Practice to link people leaving hospital and community mental health services with their GP, employment and housing and other social supports. This will help to stop the revolving door syndrome and help get people back into the workforce.

Ms Carnell added “It is important to recognise the crucial role that front line workforces such as GPs, psychologists and practice nurses play in service delivery – already GPs deliver twice as many mental health consultations as the public mental health system. And we need to make sure there is adequate funding at the coalface, where it is most needed.

“The expansion of Medicare to allow more referrals from GPs to psychologists and mental health nurses will help ensure that additional professional treatment can be accessed by patients.

Dr Jenny Thomson, ADGP Chair said “The Divisions network has been the engine room for key Australian Government general practice based programs such as the *Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care Initiative* and *MindMatters* and will have a key role in the National Youth Mental Health Foundation.

“Division-led programs are delivering results through general practice; are supported by expertise and can be cost effectively expanded. The divisions network is the obvious mechanism for driving change rolling out any new or expanded programs.

ADGP’s submission is available at our website at www.adgp.com.au

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