



NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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Working together to deliver better mental health care

ADGP has welcomed the results of a new study published in the *Australian Health Review*. The study shows that the ability of GPs to access psychological services through primary care programs results in more positive outcomes for patients.

Kate Carnell CEO of ADGP said "Mental health problems can be chronic, disabling and have a lasting impact. We need solid investment in community-based, multidisciplinary mental health care that is accessible, affordable and tailored to need."

ADGP Chair Dr Jenny Thomson said "We know that a system that combines primary care with specialist interventions in an integrated way delivers better mental health outcomes."

"Divisions of General Practice have been proud to be lead agencies for the development and establishment of a national network of new psychological services (ATAPS services) under the *Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care* program," said Ms Carnell.

"These services have filled a niche in the care options available to many people. In fact, for many of the clients accessing these Division-based services it is the first time they have received care for their mental health problem," said Dr Thomson.

"The Australian Health Review study is yet further evidence that these models of care work.

"ADGP has applauded the recent announcement by the Prime Minister of a 5 year \$1.8 billion mental health package but urge that its implementation needs careful consultation and planning.

"We urge the Government to avoid a one size fits all approach to implementing this package. The Kimberley region has different needs to inner city Sydney – this commands flexible models of service delivery.

"What communities need is a rapid expansion of ATAPS. Without continued investment in proven services such as these, rural and regional Australia will continue to suffer paltry access to quality mental health care."

In their first 2 ½ years, ATAPS services have already supported well over 26,000 consumers in the primary health care setting. 88 per cent of these clients – who are typically on low incomes, aged around 40 and diagnosed with depression or anxiety – have got better.

"Division-run services are now a vital part of the mental health landscape. ADGP looks forward to working with the Government on the delivery of local mental health care solutions through Australia's unique network of Divisions of General Practice," Dr Thomson said.

The study can be found at www.aushealthcare.com.au

For more information please call Kate Carnell, ADGP Chief Executive Officer, 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.



Telephone 02 6228 0800

Facsimile 02 6228 0899

Email adgpreception@adgp.com.au