



NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

2 May

Healthy Weight Healthy Life, Heart Week 2006

Cardiovascular disease affects one in every six Australians. That's 3.2 million people. ADGP and the Divisions Network are working at reducing those numbers by actively promoting the prevention of chronic disease through general practice.

This year's theme for Heart week is 'Healthy Weight, Healthy Life'. Being overweight has a major impact on an individual's risk of cardiovascular disease and their rehabilitation following a cardiac event. Yet Australian's often don't realise when they are overweight. Whilst 62% of men and 45% of women are overweight or obese only 32% of men and 37% of women realise that they are overweight according to 2004-05 National Health Survey. Heart week (30 April to 6 May) should prompt Australians to consider their weight and the impacts it may have on their health.

Obesity is responsible for 4.3% of the burden of disease in Australia and is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease and other chronic conditions. Over 50% of people visiting a GP will have, or be at risk for, medical conditions directly caused by excess body fat. The national clinical guidelines tell us that weight gain of 10 kilograms or more since young adulthood is associated with increased mortality, coronary heart disease, hypertension, stroke and diabetes.

"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 ADGP Chair, Dr Thomson.

The Divisions of General Practice Network is supporting general practice to promote effective weight management and healthy lifestyle advice through the Lifescripts Initiative. Lifescripts 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.

"I call on the Government to continue to support the implementation of Lifescripts through next weeks federal budget and to commit to a systematic and structured approach to provide incentives to general practice for engaging in preventative health care" said Ms Carnell.

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.



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