



NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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Substantial answers for substance abuse

Do you or someone you care about have a substance abuse problem? Your GP can help. As part of Drug Action Week the Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP) invite anyone concerned about substance abuse to visit their doctor.

ADGP Chair Dr Jenny Thomson said substance abuse is a national problem. The social cost of drug and alcohol abuse impacts greatly on all parts of the community.

"Criminal activity, violence, road accidents and the health system are all directly affected by substance abuse" Dr Thomson said.

Dr Thomson said people suffering from substance abuse need to know that GPs have the skills and resources to help combat these addictions.

"GPs are trained to recognise the signs and symptoms and provide the help patients need.

"ADGP have implemented a number of programs through the national divisions network aimed at up-skilling GPs and keeping them up to date on the latest technology and medical advancements required to address the complex needs of substance abusers," Dr Thomson said.

These programs include:

- *The 'Can Do' Initiative: Managing Mental Health and Substance Use in General Practice* aimed at coordinated care for service users with substance use and mental health concerns.
- *The Better Outcomes in Mental Health Initiative*
- *Mindmatters + for GPs*
- *Managing the Mix*

"ADGP is proud of their innovative initiatives and will continue to recognise the importance of an integrated and co-ordinated approach to helping patients deal with substance abuse problems.

"One in four people that visit a GP have a mental health or substance abuse problem that needs professional attention and GPs are qualified to deal with this" Dr Thomson said.

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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