



# NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

14 July 2006

## Co-ordinated COAG approach equals effective care coordination

Australians suffering from mental illness will be far better assisted following the COAG agreement on a National Action Plan on Mental Health.

The creation of 900 new mental health 'helpers' will result in a smoother transition between levels of care and more importantly help avoid the 'revolving door syndrome'- relapse and readmission.

ADGP CEO Kate Carnell said this plan recognises and addresses the difficulties people with mental illness face living in the community.

"This plan will add to the options supporting the psycho-social needs for some of Australia's most vulnerable people.

"Too often we see patients suffering mental illness readmitted to hospital because once discharged the assistance and support they receive is disjointed or in many cases nonexistent," Ms Carnell said.

Many people with mental illness having been discharged from hospital require support in addition to ongoing medical assistance. This includes employment, housing, education and community life. Links with community organisations and health professionals is critical to the successful care of discharged patients.

"It is vitally important that the service contributions by the various levels of government are integrated and co-ordinated on the ground, otherwise patients will continue to fall through the cracks," Ms Carnell said.

The Australian divisions network has the capacity to deliver flexible, cost effective, locally focussed service solutions and has a track record in local service co-ordination and integration. The divisions alongside existing services are the logical coordinated care provider.

The Divisions network has been the engine room for key government programs such as *Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care* and *MindMatters*.

"These 900 positions are a step in the right direction and will most definitely assist hundreds of Australians suffering from mental illness. COAG should be congratulated on their approach to this serious health issue and continue to keep mental health on their COAG agenda," Ms Carnell 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.



Telephone 02 6228 0800

Facsimile 02 6228 0899

Email [adgpreception@adgp.com.au](mailto:adgpreception@adgp.com.au)