



NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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It's a world of diabetes out there

Marking World Diabetes Day (November 14) Australia's peak body representing general practice, the Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP) has called for more national awareness and early intervention measures to reduce the incidence of this epidemic.

ADGP Chair Dr Tony Hobbs said the statistics are frightening and much more needs to be done.

"Diabetes is the sixth highest cause of death in Australia and our Aboriginal population suffer the 4th highest rates of Type 2 Diabetes in the world. (www.diabetesaustralia.com.au)

"The International Diabetes Federation estimates that in 2025, 350 million people worldwide will suffer from diabetes compared to the 30 million in 1985.

"World Diabetes Day aims to co-ordinate diabetes advocacy, raise awareness of the disease and celebrate the lives of people suffering from diabetes," Dr Hobbs said.

ADGP CEO Kate Carnell said the recently submitted ADGP budget submission recommended the inclusion of obesity in its own right as a chronic condition under the Chronic Disease Management item numbers. This would provide people who are overweight or obese with access to GP care plans and multidisciplinary team care arrangements.

"Recognising obesity as a chronic illness will allow for early intervention by GPs to reduce the chances of patients becoming diabetics," Ms Carnell said.

Divisions of general practice already play a very important role in providing targeted programs to reduce the amount of people becoming diabetics and helping those who already suffer from the disease.

A unique initiative called the Metabolic Management Program running in the Sydney area of Macarthur helps local people change their lifestyles for the better. In collaboration with the local council, the Local Area Health Service and GPs, the Macarthur Division of General Practice run four targeted exercise and dietary information programs for different groups including a specific diabetes class.

GPs refer patients to the classes which are conducted by dietitians and exercise physiologists. The results speak for themselves. 705 patients have been referred since November 2004. One program has seen the average weight of participants drop by 7.7kg and flexibility improved by 113%.

"It is local, targeted programs such as this one that will help reduce the incidences of diabetes and other chronic diseases. Co-ordinated and workable solutions on the ground delivered and managed by divisions, GPs and other local service providers quite obviously work," Ms Carnell said.

For more information please call Kate Carnell, ADGP Chief Executive Officer, on 0415 662 266 or Macarthur Division of General Practice Rene Pennock on 02 4625 9522

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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