Australian General Practice Network

Board Communiqué

The AGPN Board met on 29th November on the Gold Coast

The Australian General Practice Network is pleased to announce that Dr Hobbs was unanimously elected as Chairperson at the November 2006 AGPN Board meeting.

Board Committee Chairs were also elected, with the AGPN Board supporting Dr Michael Taylor as the Chair, Finance and Audit, Dr Emil Djakic elected as Chair of the Governance Committee, Dr Chris Pearce elected Chair of the Information Management Committee, Dr Ken Connolly elected to the position of Chair of the Rural Committee, and Dr Hilary Fine elected as Chair of the Forum Steering Committee.

The AGPN Board debated the Network's need for a business development Committee. A paper concerning the possible terms of reference, financial implications and focus of this committee will be discussed by the Board at the February 2007 Board meeting.

FORUM DEBRIEF

The Forum was declared a success with early member feedback being positive. All Directors were happy with the outcome of the AGM, the acceptance by members of the new branding and communications strategy, with the accompanying change of the ADGP name to the Australian General Practice Network.

The associated forum events - the Aged Care Conference and the Mental Health Symposium - also received very positive feedback and it was agreed that they should be considered as standard adjunct events for future Forums.

Other issues discussed included the timing and length of the Forum, associated focus and format of the sessions and a need to ensure a new, fresh format each year. There was a general consensus that some of the sessions were too focused on presentations and information dissemination and needed to be more interactive and workshop based. The new Forum sub committee will be formed very soon to commence work on next year's program.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Board discussed other business including the identification of indigenous persons in health software. It was agreed that the issue should be progressed as an advocacy role for the General Practice Representative Group (GPRG).

In September 06, the AGPN Board completed an external performance review. The outcomes and actions from the review were discussed and recommendations will be progressed at the February Board meeting. Overall the review was very positive.

The new Chair of AGPN, Dr Tony Hobbs reported a busy but rewarding time during his first ten weeks in the position. Tony visited a number of SBOs and Divisions and reported that some issues had been raised consistently including the need for an IM strategy and policy for the Network, the need for a shared vision, a consolidated communications strategy, the continuation of the National Primary Care Collaboratives and issues relating to the National Quality Performance System.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Finance and Audit Committee reported that AGPN was tracking well against budget.

The Governance Committee reported on the current governance review of AGPN and outlined the process and first consultation results. The first paper was circulated with 35 responses received from the network. The responses indicated support for AGPN to determine committee structure and flexibility in constitutional change. The Committee will meet to discuss further recommendations prior to going to Board for ratification.

The Rural Committee reported that priorities included monitoring of uptake of new mental health items throughout rural Australia and constructive feedback on the Rural Medical Infrastructure Fund. RDAA are keen to work with AGPN on the priorities identified by the Committee.

The WA Committee is tracking well, with an ambitious and positive state health agenda. The WA state office's review, due for completion prior to the contract period was discussed, and the review process is underway with support from all WA Divisions for a transparent and planned process. The Board agreed that Dr Fine should remain as WA Committee Director.

A draft Information Management position paper was being discussed by the IM committee – soon to be circulated by the AGPN Board to the Network for comment and feedback.

The Board also agreed to the policy planning and consultation process to be implemented for the "Funding Models for General Practice" discussion paper.

PRIORITIES AND PLANNING

The Directors discussed priorities and planning for 2007 with a Board planning day scheduled for February 2007. The Board considered the resolution passed at the AGM. The Board recognised the need to consider AGPN's role and priorities as the peak body for the Network in its future strategic planning and balance that with its strategic planning as AGPN - the company.