

Press Release



Central Coast
Division of
General Practice



4th March 2010

Reforming the health system a step in the right direction

"Today's national health reform announcements provide the opportunity for better health for all local residents but only if the Commonwealth acts quickly to strengthen the primary health care sector", says Central Coast Division of General Practice (CCDGP) Chair, Dr Phil Godden.

"While CCDGP welcomes the moves to improve our local public hospital system, real change – prevention of unnecessary illness and reductions in Australia's high hospitalisation rates – will only occur through strengthened primary health care based around general practice," Dr Godden said.

Dr Godden stressed the need for the Government to maintain two sectors in health care, hospital and primary, and utilise the relationship crossover these have in regional areas.

"A reformed primary health care system must have general practice at its centre and quarantined funding distinctly separate to the hospital sector.

"We know that this system works and by maintaining the same financial processes (quarantined funding) it ensures that the money is not syphoned off into the hospital sector.

"Only separate primary health care organisations with a direct funding link will give us a sustainable health system," said Dr Godden.

The CCDGP provides much needed programs in areas such as Mental Health, Chronic Disease, After Hours Medical Services (Bridges), Acute Post Acute GP Shared Care, Cervical Screening Programs to name but a few, and the Government's focus on primary health care will help the organization continue and enhance their valuable work.

He noted that while today's announcement was a good start the Government would need to act on these changes and release the other stages of the reform agenda in a timely manner. He also noted that the devil was sometimes in the detail and he waited with interest to view some of that detail.

CCDGP looks forward to the rest of the Government's health reform agenda and working with Government to secure and improve the health and wellbeing of all Australians.

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