

Press Release



Central Coast
Division of
General Practice



August 2010

The Central Coast Division of General Practice sees pivotal role for Primary Health Care Organisations in mental health programs

Dr Phil Godden says general practitioners are appealing to all political parties to recognise and support the value in flexible, tailored mental health programs and funding arrangements for mental health care, which can be supported by the Primary Health Care Organisations (PHCOs) of the future.

"PHCOs will work to ensure consumers receive the coordinated care they have long desired and the after hours services needed to help them when their health care needs are not nine to five," Dr Phil Godden said.

"For patients requiring mental health services, access to after hours services facilitated through PHCOs will be critical to timely and effective treatment and support.

"However, it's not just the availability of services that matter but the type of programs and services for mental health care that are available as well.

The Central Coast Division of General Practice is calling on the major parties to show a commitment to:

- Expanding the world leading ATAPs (Access to Psychological Services). This service enables GPs and allied health professionals to target groups and patients who are most at risk for more complex mental health related problems.
- Implementing *AusATP* (Improved Access to Psychological Services). This innovative service enables recipients to access user-friendly, self-directed on-line therapy including phone coaching. PHCOs provide the right access for highlighting this valuable program to local communities, which can benefit significantly from this early intervention service.
- Expanding the number of **headspace** youth mental health services nationally and ensure that PHCOs have a leadership role in establishing this excellent service for young people.

Authorised by: Mr. Bill Parker

For Release to: Media outlets

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Further details and
information can be gained by
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- Expanding the *Personal Helpers and Mentors Program* (PHAMS), to be funded through PHCOs and to strengthen the links to hospital admission avoidance programs.

“Poor mental health often impacts on other illnesses and chronic diseases that need a multidisciplinary approach to treatment. GPs, nurses and allied health professionals within a PHCO environment will be better equipped and resourced to tackle the growing rates of mental health issues facing our local community, if a future Australian government can guarantee enhancing these mental health services and programs,” Dr Phil Godden said.

For Media Interviews contact Dr Phil Godden on 0425 215 840

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