



Primary Source

Medicare Locals - Transition

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Strong response to Medicare Locals

Acting Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon. Mark Butler MP
Media release extract

The Australian primary health care sector has thrown its support strongly behind the Gillard Government's primary health care reforms, with 58 different organisations and consortia applying to become one of Australia's first Medicare Locals.

Acting Minister for Health and Ageing Mark Butler welcomed the keen interest from Divisions of General Practice and other primary health care groups in establishing Australia's first ever network of primary health care organisations – Medicare Locals.

"Medicare Locals will help to provide primary care services which are more responsive to the needs of local communities," Minister Butler said.

"They will make it easier for patients to access the health services they need by identifying service gaps in local communities, helping to keep Australians well and out of hospital.

"This high number of applications shows strong interest from primary health care groups to become a Medicare Local – a key part of national health reform.

"Our primary healthcare approach recognises the fundamental importance of GPs as being the centre of primary care.

"Medicare Locals build on the important role already delivered by Divisions of General Practice, focusing on improving local health and medical services through better coordination and integration of frontline primary health care services," the Minister said.

Assessment and feedback for tranche 1 applications



Speeches for the 2010 AGPN National Forum can be found at:

www.gpnetworkforum.com.au/forum-speeches

[Click here to view the events calendar.](#)

Out of the 58 applications lodged for the Tranche 1 Invitation to Apply, all but five Medicare Local areas were covered by an application and in a few areas there was more than one application from Divisions.

The Department has confirmed that they are aiming to have the assessments complete and approvals announced by mid May. This means that feedback will be given individually by the end of May. This will leave approximately six weeks for applicants who need to revise their ITA applications, before the next round in July.

We have asked the Department to provide us with non-identified generic feedback about the applications to help inform the priorities for providing support to applicants.

If a Division would like a member of the national or state transition team to be involved in the feedback discussions with the Department we would be a happy to do so at your request.

Life after tranche 1

With the first milestone in the process complete the National Transition Team is now turning its attention to the next steps. Divisions will begin to follow different paths that will require different types of support activities;

- applicants approved to commence in July 2011;
- applicants meeting the criteria but not in the first tranche awaiting completion of tranche 2/3 assessments;
- revised applications following feedback; and
- new applications for submission by 19 July.

There will also be some Divisions that decide not to apply to operate Medicare Locals and they will require transition support in the lead up to the end of Commonwealth core funding in July 2012.

Needs assessment will be conducted for each pathway to ensure that transition support work is appropriately targeted at both state and national levels. A series of meetings will be held with different groups by the end of May to facilitate this.

Stakeholder meetings

There will be a renewed focus during this next phase on communicating with peak organisations in the primary health care and wider health sector. The aims will be to inform about Medicare Locals, clarify the implementation process and identify opportunities for supporting local level engagement.

Collaborative Master Class

With the first tranche of ITAs submissions off people's collective plate, it is an ideal time to reflect on the importance of partnerships, stakeholder and community engagement and collaborative activity inherent in the ITA selection criteria, and an essential time to turn your attention to the next step; the action!

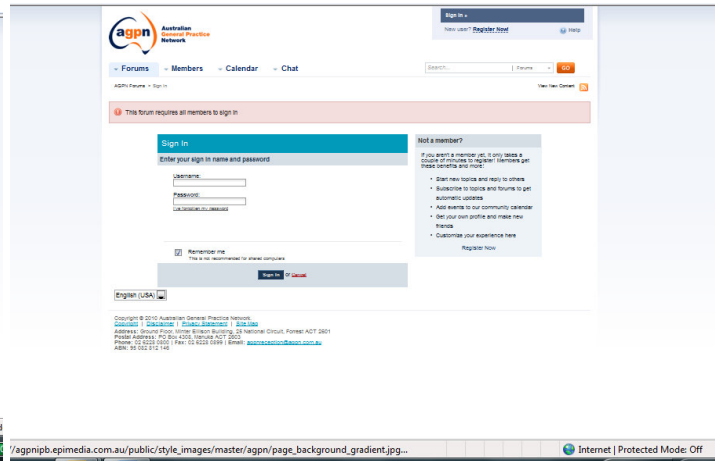
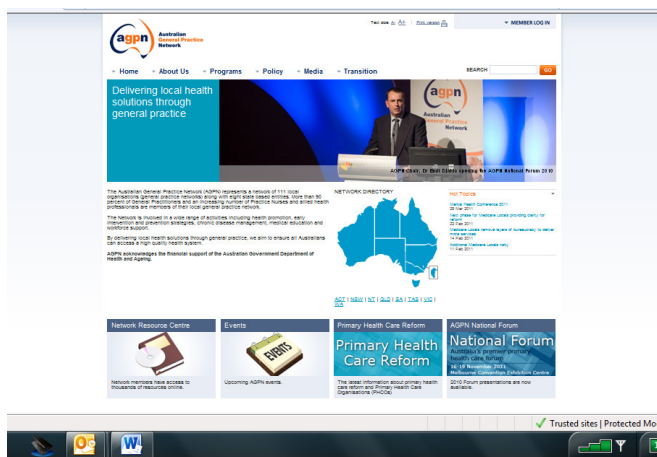
As part of the popular Master Class series, AGPN is conducting the **"Collaborative working: Partnerships and**

Engaging Communities” Master Class on **Tuesday 3 and Wednesday 4 May at the Citigate King George Square in Brisbane.**

Developed by Jim Cavaye (PhD), the program is designed to provide participants with a range of skills and information that can be used to find practical solutions to their own challenges. Participants will develop engagement plans and develop processes for evaluating their engagement activities, with practical examples drawn from their own experiences. The program is designed to help participants get answers to their questions. Further information and a draft program are available from the AGPN Website www.agpn.com.au/about-us/agpn-events

Medicare Local Transition - resources

Medicare Local transition resources are available through two distinct websites.



AGPN Website
www.agpn.com.au/medicarelocaltransition

AGPN Transition Forums
www.medicarelocaltransition.com.au

AGPN Website

Information, products and services can now be accessed under 'Transition' on the AGPN Website at:

www.agpn.com.au/medicarelocaltransition. These web pages contain resources on governance, partnerships and engagement, population health, organisational development, change management and support in developing ITA applications. No username or password is required.

AGPN Transition Forums

Registered members can also participate in online forums at: www.medicarelocaltransition.com.au. These forums are in Q&A format and focus on key issues such as legal and governance, human resources and the ITA application process. To register for the AGPN Transition Forums please contact Jan Ridd at jridd@agpn.com.au stating your name, position, email address and organisation.

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