

Thursday 17 November, 2011

## Scope for primary health care – ‘watch this space’

### AGPN National Forum

*Transforming for success – Building on strengths, embracing partnerships*

17-19 November, 2011

Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

The Australian General Practice Network (AGPN) says flexible and appropriately scaled funding is needed for Medicare Locals to make a solid difference in local communities AGPN Chair, Dr Emil Djakic said today.

“The General Practice Network is doing the hard yards and installing the new primary health care structures through Medicare Locals – but structures are not enough,” Dr Djakic said.

“Investing in their potential and enabling Medicare Locals to progressively reach across their catchments will deliver the true intent behind the primary health care reforms,” he said.

“The scope for primary health care innovation and improvement is generating momentum as general practice takes the lead with other clinicians and sectors at this important national event to share knowledge, expertise and expectations for this reforming system.

“Medicare Locals will prove to be a better system for health services by providing sustainable, adaptable, responsive and integrated services to meet local needs around the general practice sector, the cornerstone of community-based health services. Delegates will learn more about the programs delivering good outcomes to improve the health of communities,” Dr Djakic said.

“Some of the country’s key health advocates at the Forum include, The Hon. Nicola Roxon MP Minister for Health and Ageing, the AMA’s President, Dr Steve Hambleton and RACGP’s Vice President Dr Elizabeth Marles.

“Associate Professor Cheryl Kernot will discuss the concepts of social entrepreneurship and social innovation and its place in primary health care and delegates will hear from some of Australia’s health system leaders including The Australian National Preventive Health Agency’s CEO Louise Sylvan and the Interim Independent Hospital Pricing Authority’s acting CEO Tony Sherbon who will discuss with other panelists what it takes to transform health care systems.

“But the real question is *how far have we come with reforming the health system?* This question will be put to a number of the country’s key health reformers and advocates including: Professor Helen Keleher, Public Health Association of Australia President; Dr Christine Bennett Chair Bupa Medical Advisory Panel Australia; Carol Bennett, Consumers Health Forum Australia CEO,” Dr Djakic said.

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Bupa, Australia's largest privately-owned healthcare group, is pleased to be entering its fifth year as Principal Partner of the AGPN National Forum.

Bupa's Director of Strategy and Commercial Development, Hisham El-Ansary said health organisations like Bupa will increasingly play an important role in the long-term primary health care journey of the nation.

"At Bupa, we are committed to empowering and supporting Australians to make better health and lifestyle choices, with a view to helping reduce the chronic disease burden in this country," Mr El-Ansary said.

For a copy of the **National Forum program** go to: [www.gpnetworkforum.com.au](http://www.gpnetworkforum.com.au)

Federal Minister for Health and Ageing, Nicola Roxon will be speaking on **Friday 18 November at 10am**

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