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Diabetes Advisory Group measures up for health planning

The Australian General Practice Network (AGPN) has welcomed a new advisory group on diabetes, announced today by the Federal Health Minister, Nicola Roxon, during Diabetes Week.

AGPN Chair, Dr Emil Djakic said the formation of the Advisory Group responded to a call from AGPN for such a consultative mechanism to be established. He said the Advisory Group has the broad mix of consumers, health professionals, nurses, allied health providers and patients who are necessary to help plan and develop a model of care for patients with diabetes across the country.

"We are on the brink of delivering better coordinated, integrated multidisciplinary care through a broader primary health care sector, and programs for chronic diseases like diabetes require the input of these experts to shape them," Dr Djakic said.

"AGPN has said previously that Australia can lead the world with diabetes care and this advisory group's credentials are a testament to that aim.

"Too often advisory groups can come at the expense of those who are really in 'the know': however in this case, having people with diabetes joining health professionals will make a world of difference to the outcomes. The Advisory Group will ensure that any new arrangements meet the needs of actual patients and those who are helping to manage their care.

"Care for patients with diabetes is a multi-disciplinary activity and it is therefore appropriate that this expert advisory group incorporates the key professional groups who can contribute to the development of a dedicated program for diabetes. General practice is central to the coordination of the care of most patients with diabetes and it is therefore right that AGPN be involved in this process.

"The \$449.2m the Federal Government is investing in diabetes care is a significant investment for treating this chronic disease.

"If Australia's health system is to cope with the exponential demands that diabetes will place on health services into the future, it's vital the right people, with the right skills co-ordinate and share their expertise to design an effective program for this funding pool for diabetic management," Dr Djakic said.

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