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AGPN to deliver for Medicare Locals nationally

The Federal Government's decision to invite the Australian General Practice Network [AGPN] to form the nation's new national body for Medicare Locals is a ringing endorsement of AGPN's position in the nation's primary health care reforms, AGPN Chair Dr Emil Djakic said today.

"AGPN is confident it will meet the criteria to fulfill the expectations of the new national body which will benefit from AGPN's current functions and responsibilities," Dr Djakic said.

"Driving the primary health care reforms has been integral to AGPN's business in which the Divisions of General Practice have been placed front and centre in the development of the nation's new primary health care organisations, Medicare Locals," he said.

"The design of this national body for Medicare Locals will deliver the one-on-one approach the Commonwealth is seeking to achieve with primary health care – Commonwealth funding through to local delivery.

"A national body will provide the policy and program innovation and national perspective that is needed to progress primary health care across the country and to build the bigger picture for primary health care for all Australians.

"It will also provide the coordination and links for other peak national health and social care bodies including those from the Indigenous sector, consumers, aged care sector and other primary health care providers such as allied health groups, which will increasingly play a role in the delivery and improvement of general practice and primary health care across the country.

"Greater efficiency and the streamlining of primary health care programs will be achieved with the design of this national organisation in which state functions will be encompassed within the Medicare Local national body as of 2013.

"The Government's decision to extend funding for the Divisions of General Practice State-Based Organisations [SBOs] until 31 December, 2012 is also a welcome decision which will provide the current SBOs with a workable schedule during this process of transitioning.

"Since July this year, 19 Medicare Locals that evolved from more than 40 Divisions of General Practice, started to implement the new system for primary health care. As the founder of a new national body, AGPN looks forward to continuing the delivery of the remaining Medicare Locals during this period of transition," Dr Djakic said.

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