

Monday 12 December, 2011

AGPN welcomes new Health Minister

Today's announcement from the Prime Minister Julia Gillard regarding the appointment of Human Services Minister and Minister for Social Inclusion Tanya Plibersek, to the Health portfolio is welcome news for the Australian General Practice Network (AGPN).

AGPN Chair Dr Emil Djakic said the Cabinet re-shuffle brings an experienced Minister with skills in the social sector to the health and ageing portfolio.

"AGPN has had a close working relationship with the Minister for Health and Ageing Nicola Roxon, and we congratulate the Minister for her achievements throughout this reform period, particularly her commitment to develop the primary health care strategy for this country and wish her well in her new portfolio," Dr Djakic said.

"Minister Roxon has overseen a progressive reform agenda with the establishment of Medicare Locals across the nation, of which 19 have got the ball rolling and another 18 will keep the momentum going as of January.

"Minister Roxon should also be congratulated for her leadership in health which has gone beyond structural reforms especially her achievements in tobacco reform and especially the introduction of the plain packaging legislation that will take effect as of December 1 2012.

"The Minister's dedication and determination to take on the tobacco industry has placed Australia at the forefront of tobacco reform internationally.

"AGPN looks forward to working with Ms Plibersek, to complete the Medicare Local infrastructure needed to pursue the opportunities identified in the primary health care strategy that is set to deliver sustainable health care for the nation.

"AGPN also welcomes the elevation of the Minister for Mental Health and Ageing Mark Butler to Cabinet which has effectively elevated mental health and aged care for this country.

"The announcement that Minister Butler will also be taking on the Social Inclusion Ministry is a good sign for comprehensive health reform," Dr Djakic said.

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