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## **Major parties need to face up to their primary health care obligations**

Australian General Practice Network Chair, Dr Emil Djakic has called on the major parties for this 2010 general election put their 'money where their mouth is' for the primary health care sector and to pledge their commitment to this community-based care with achievable policies and significant program implementation.

AGPN has today released its election manifesto outlining its key priorities for this 2010 Federal Election.

"A network of Australian primary health care organisations connected to communities and building on general practice networks to deliver better local and regional care, is fundamental to health care reform," Dr Djakic said.

"Once established, PHCOs will be the driving force for preventive health care programs, integrated and multidisciplinary care that will work towards alleviating the reliance upon services delivered through the hospital sector," Dr Djakic said.

"AGPN has identified a number of measures that if funded adequately and implemented generously, will help to steer this nation's population health record lower down the 'sick list'. These measures include:

- Providing general practices with cost effective incentives to employ practice nurses and continue to fund the general practice network-led Nursing in General Practice Program, to recruit, train and retain nurses in general practice
- Rolling out the e-health 'change and adoption' strategy through 60 e-health change agents located throughout the General Practice Network
- Expanding the world leading ATAPS (Access to Psychological Services) program to target priority groups and people with more complex mental health problems
- Expanding the Personal Helpers and Mentors Program and fund through PHCOs to ensure strong links between existing NGO-delivered PHAMS services and PHC services, share care and hospital admission avoidance programs
- Expanding the number of *Headspace* youth mental health services nationally
- Implementing comprehensive, accessible GP after hours services for families coordinated by PHCOs
- Funding a national roll out of *Eat It, Work It, Move It*: an evidence-based program developed to promote health policy and healthy lifestyles to high schools

- Funding the Network to work in partnership with local aged care facilities and primary health care professionals to ensure older Australians living in these facilities have timely access to GP and primary health care services
- Implementing *GP Access*: an online health and wellness program based on the evidence-based Fitness2live program
- Implementing *Time for Action*, comprising the *Community Heart Care* program: a PHCO-led hospital avoidance program for people with coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease.

“PHCOs will be designed to be the centre of health care services and processes for local communities.

“Delivering local and connected care for patients is the objective but it’s the funding and the programs on offer within the system that will determine the success of the primary health care sector,” Dr Djakic said.

**AGPN Election Manifesto: [www.agpn.com.au](http://www.agpn.com.au)**

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