

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 3rd March 2010

Reforming the health system a step in the right direction

Today's national health reform announcements provide the opportunity for better health for all local residents but only if the Commonwealth acts quickly to strengthen the primary health care sector, says Adelaide Northern Division of General Practice CEO Mrs Barbara Magin.

"While Adelaide Northern Division of General Practice welcomes the moves to improve our local public hospital system, real change – prevention of unnecessary illness and reductions in Australia's high hospitalisation rates – will only occur through strengthened primary health care based around general practice," Ms Magin said.

Ms Magin stressed the need for the Government to maintain two sectors in health care, hospital and primary, and utilise the relationship crossover these have in regional areas.

"A reformed primary health care system must have general practice at its centre and quarantined funding distinctly separate to the acute sector.

"We know that this system works and by maintaining the same financial processes (quarantined funding) it ensures that the money is not syphoned off into the acute sector.

"Only separate primary health care organisations with a direct funding link will give us a sustainable health system," said Ms Magin.

The Adelaide Northern Division of General Practice provides much needed programs in the areas of mental health and mental health counselling for all ages, general practice support and GP training, immunisation coordination, practice nursing, IT support, Aboriginal healthcare and aged care. The government's focus on primary health care will help the organisation continue their work.

She noted that while today's announcement was a good start the government would need to act on these changes and release the other stages of the reform agenda in a timely manner.

Adelaide Northern Division of General Practice looks forward to the rest of the government's health reform agenda and working with government to secure and improve the health and wellbeing of all Australians.

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