

GENERAL PRACTICE NETWORK LEADERSHIP GROUP (GPNLG)

COMMUNIQUE

Meeting held in Canberra on Thursday 14 February and Friday 15 February 2008

CHAIR: Dr Tony Hobbs, Australian General Practice Network (AGPN)

The first meeting of the General Practice Network Leadership Group for 2008 was held in Canberra on 14-15 February. The Group comprises the Chairs and CEOs of AGPN and the State/Territory Based Organisations.

The GPNLG discussed the implementation of the GP Super Clinic program – an initiative of the Federal Government. It was agreed that there was a strong need for divisions to drive the process in their local communities to ensure engagement by relevant stakeholders. AGPN is developing a resource kit which includes a checklist, principles, sustainability considerations and various governance and business models for consideration by divisions interested in submitting an application.

The GPNLG spent time discussing the detailed pitch that articulates the place of divisions in working with state/territory health departments and in becoming a provider of choice particularly in the areas of hospital avoidance and chronic disease prevention and management. The paper outlines a model of care, based on a literature review and evaluated experiences from the network. It was agreed by the GPNLG that the paper will be a valuable lobbying tool for use nationally (by AGPN to the Federal Government) and by SBOs (to State/Territory jurisdictions). A strategy document will be developed outlining what the next steps are to ensure a uniform approach is taken by the GPNLG.

The CEO members of the GPNLG met with the Improvement Foundation (Australia) to discuss the progress of the Australian Primary Care Collaboratives Program. The GPNLG recommended the establishment of a formal partnership between the Improvement Foundation and the GPNLG to better enable the program to be embedded across the entire network. The GPNLG will meet again with the Improvement Foundation in early March to formalise this relationship, discuss the program strategy and look at any opportunities for improvement.

A meeting was also held with senior members of the central office of the Department of Health and Ageing. The GPNLG were briefed on the new Government's policy agenda in primary health care including the focus on patient-centric care and better support to GPs to deliver care. The Minister's priorities were discussed including:

- the development of a National Primary Health Care Strategy
- a review of the Medicare Benefits Scheme (MBS)
- a review of the Rural Medical Infrastructure Fund
- a focus on integrated care, preventative health care and caring better for patients with chronic disease
- GP Super Clinics.

A range of strategic issues and operational matters put forward by members were also discussed including:

- The value of a Joint CEO and Board Directors Meeting for AGPN and the State/Territory Based Organisations to enable cross-fertilisation of ideas across the network
- The need for the completion of a stock-take and mapping exercise of network activity in the eHealth space
- The opportunity for the Practice Nursing Program to be extended beyond 30 June 08
- The potential for divisions to form regional collaborative groups to work together to progress various regional initiatives by aligning to funding flows from state/territory governments
- The potential purchase and implementation of a network wide financial management system that will be made available to all divisions
- The delivery of the GP Census Surveying Tool to all divisions by 1 July 2008.

The CEO members of the GPNLG will meet next via teleconference on Thursday 28 February 2008.

For further information please contact your State/Territory Based Organisation.