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MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release



Future of Australia's health in GPs' hands

Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, has just presented the Government's *National Health and Hospital Network for Australia's future* report, which he described as 'the most significant reforms to health and hospitals since the introduction of Medicare'.

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) has previously welcomed the broad directions proposed by the National Health and Hospital Reform Commission (NHHRC), most critically the evolution of a health system based on person and family centred care, greater equity and a strong emphasis on prevention.

Dr Chris Mitchell, RACGP President, understands that this was a presentation on the hospital system, but believes that this was a missed opportunity to talk directly about investment in general practice, primary health care and prevention.

The proposed National Health and Hospital Network will be funded nationally and run locally with input from local health clinicians.

"As a rural GP with a hospital appointment on the north coast of New South Wales that featured highly in the Prime Minister's speech, I welcome the proposal for more local involvement and decision making. I hope that GPs will be able to play a significant role in these local networks," said Dr Mitchell.

"We hope that future submissions in relation to primary health care, prevention and sub-acute care will better support GPs' key role in the communities.

"The role of the National Health and Hospital Network outlined on page 65 in the *National Health and Hospital Network for Australia's future* report is very broad and we will need more details on its implementation," concluded Dr Mitchell.

The *National Health and Hospital Network for Australia's future* report is available at www.yourhealth.gov.au.

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About the RACGP

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) sets and maintains the standards for quality clinical practice, education and training, and research in Australian general practice, and represents Australia's urban and rural general practitioners. Visit www.racgp.org.au.