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MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release



Invest in the future of general practice – RACGP Federal Budget submission

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) is calling for more funding for general practice in the May Federal Budget.

RACGP President Dr Chris Mitchell said that GPs provide care to patients on a daily basis and are in an ideal position to understand what is and isn't working in each sector of the health care system

"In May, the Australian Government has an opportunity to make clear its commitment to real and meaningful health care reform and to take further steps to ensure a sustainable general practice profession," he said.

In its budget submission, the college advocates that the Federal Government should invest in the future of general practice, recognise and reward quality general practice, improve integration of primary health care, support practices in Aboriginal communities, support international medical graduates (IMGs), and implement a no-fault social insurance scheme.

Key recommendations made by the college include:

- increasing the number of prevocational and vocational training places; we need 1,500 prevocational training places per year by 2012 and 1,500 vocational training places per year by 2015
- increasing the number general practice training supervisors to reflect the need to increasing training numbers
- providing funding to explore alternatives to the 10 Year Moratorium for IMGs
- investing \$530 million into general practice and primary health care infrastructure
- increasing the recruitment of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander registrars into general practice training
- the introduction of a *Red Book* based preventive health items number
- improving MBS arrangements to support a broader range of work undertaken by practice nurses and allied health workers for and on behalf of general practitioners.

Dr Mitchell said investment in health needed to remain a priority in this year's budget.

"As Australia continues to cope with an ageing population, and an increase in chronic disease, more demands will be placed on GPs and carers alike. We hope the Federal Government considers our recommendations in order to provide for a sustainable and effective general practice profession in the future," he said.

The college is committed to work with all levels of government to improve access to high quality care to better meet the needs of our local communities.

To read the RACGP 2010/2011 Federal Budget submission in detail, visit www.racgp.org.au/healthreform.

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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.