

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## GPs make a difference to Australia's health

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's (AIHW) report *Australia's health 2010* that was released today reconfirmed that general practitioners are increasingly involved in the long-term care of more patients with complex multiple medical problems such as high blood pressure, diabetes and cholesterol disorders.

Dr Chris Mitchell, RACGP President, said that this report was important and points towards long-term trends in healthcare for all Australians.

"The majority of Australians' health services are provided by GPs and this must be addressed through better recognition of the work of GPs.

"While the continued development of multidisciplinary care teams is also essential in the management of this increasing clinical workload, GPs must remain as the front line of primary health care offering whole person, comprehensive and coordinated care to the community," he said.

Dr Mitchell also highlighted that one way to help manage chronic conditions and complex care needs is e-health and that investments in e-health are fundamental.

"With the *Healthcare Identifiers Bill 2010* yet to be passed by the Senate, this report is a timely reminder that e-health investments should no longer be delayed.

"Without improvements in e-health and medical information management systems, we will continue to expose patients to unnecessary risks, including adverse events and medication errors. Every person in Australia should receive care that is informed by an electronic health summary. The passing of the *Healthcare Identifiers Bill 2010* is paving the path for the future. Healthcare identifiers are an important building block to enable a national Individual Electronic Health Record (IEHR) system," Dr Mitchell concluded.

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) continues to advocate for significant increases in the general practice workforce, stronger teams and better team work within general practice, better general practice infrastructure and investment in e-health to improve patient health outcomes.

The AIHW *Australia's health 2010* report is available at [www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.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](http://www.racgp.org.au).