

UGPA Media Release

24 November 2011

GENUINE CONSULTATION NOT LIP SERVICE WITH GPs

United General Practice Australia (UGPA) leaders have warned the Commonwealth and State Governments to ensure there is genuine consultation with GP groups on primary health care policy and reform or risk alienating the core sector of the reform process.

During a meeting today in Canberra, UGPA reiterated the need for better consultation and communication about the role of Medicare Locals.

While UGPA noted that the Commonwealth and State Governments' plan to develop a national primary health care framework and primary health care plans, it says it's essential that meaningful engagement with the GP community is undertaken.

On after hours, while UGPA believes the current practice incentive scheme has supported after hours arrangements for many years, UGPA wants to ensure that the renewed approach through Medicare Locals must expand and not limit after hours services. GPs need certainty that they will continue to be supported to provide these services.

UGPA is calling on the first tranche of Medicare Locals to plan and consult appropriately and give clear indications about how after hours PIP arrangements will be finalised going into 2013. Medicare Locals must ensure that GPs who currently provide after hours care and the communities they serve are not disadvantaged by the new arrangements.

All UGPA members agreed that the Government must ensure that GPs are properly funded for extra work undertaken to facilitate the implementation of the Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record (PCEHR).

United General Practice Australia (UGPA) comprises the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, the Australian Medical Association, the Australian General Practice Network, General Practice Registrars Australia, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, and the Rural Doctors Association of Australia.