

MEDIA RELEASE



United voice for primary health care acting for all Australians

With the average Australian life expectancy now at 81.4 years and governments around the country struggling to rein in hospital spending, there's never been more need for a united voice from the primary health care sector.

The National Primary Health Care Partnership (NPHCP) is well qualified to be that voice, representing 19 peak bodies of health organisations and more than 100,000 frontline health professionals.

The Partnership was officially launched by Federal Health Minister Nicola Roxon today at Parliament House in Canberra.

Australia's health system is facing a number of serious challenges, such as the workforce crisis in primary health care, an ageing population, an increase in chronic disease and inequitable access to health care for Indigenous, rural and remote communities.

Chair of the NPHCP Kate Carnell welcomed the Federal Government's commitment to develop a national primary health care strategy.

"During last year's Federal election campaign the Partnership called on both the Coalition and Labor parties to implement a long term primary health care strategy.

"We welcome Labor's commitment to the strategy and we will work closely with the External Reference Group - a number of who are members of this Partnership.

"All primary health care professionals play a vital role in keeping Australians healthy and as our life span increases, it's becoming more important to ensure we remain in good health well into our old age," Ms Carnell said.

"We want a health care system that invests in primary health care and places patients squarely placed at the centre".

"We want patients treated by a multidisciplinary team of health professionals who practice medicine that's based on the best available clinical evidence."

"We want to help ensure local communities are able to find innovative solutions to their specific health needs," Ms Carnell said.

The NPHCP is keen to work with government and others in the health care sector to ensure there's less pressure on public hospitals and better support for people to in the community.

"Our generation and future generations deserve the right to accessible, affordable and sustainable health care system," Ms Carnell said.

For media inquiries please call AGPN Communications Manager Kathryn Conroy on 0416 428 678

Please see following page for a list of organisations

Primary health care is “the principal vehicle for the delivery of health care at the most local level of a country’s health system,” – World Health Organization.

National Primary Health Care Partnership members:

Allied Health Professions Australia
Audiology Australia
Australasian Podiatry Council
Australian Association for Sports and Exercise Science
Australian Association of Social Workers
Australian Dental Association
Australian General Practice Network
Australian Physiotherapy Association
Australian Practice Nurses Association
Australian Psychological Society
Consumers Health Forum of Australia
Dietitians Association of Australia
Occupational Therapy Australia
Optometrists Association of Australia
Pharmacy Guild of Australia
Royal College of Nursing Australia
Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health
Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia
Speech Pathology Australia