



**AMA Family
Doctor Week 2016**

YOUR FAMILY DOCTOR:
INVALUABLE TO YOUR HEALTH



HEALTH CARE HOME TRIAL MUST BE PROPERLY FUNDED

AMA FAMILY DOCTOR WEEK, 24-30 July 2016

Your Family Doctor: Invaluable to your health

In AMA Family Doctor Week, the AMA is calling on the Federal Government to allocate appropriate funding for the trial of the Health Care Home model of care for patients with chronic disease.

Under the model, also known as the Medical Home, patients have a continuing relationship with a particular GP to coordinate the care delivered by all members of the patient’s care team.

In March, the Government committed \$21 million to allow about 65,000 Australians to participate in initial two-year trials in up to 200 medical practices from 1 July 2017. However, the funding is not directed at services for patients.

AMA President, Dr Michael Gannon, said that the Health Care Home is potentially one of the biggest reforms to Medicare in decades, and the AMA is keen to work with the Government to make it a success.

“The Medical Home is fundamental to the concept of the family doctor who can provide holistic and longitudinal care and, in leading the multidisciplinary care team, safeguard the appropriateness and continuity of care,” Dr Gannon said.

“BEACH data shows that GPs are managing more chronic disease. But they are under substantial financial pressure due to the Medicare freeze and a range of other funding cuts.

“GPs cannot afford to deliver enhanced care to patients with no extra support. If the funding model is not right, GPs will not engage with the trial, and the model will struggle to succeed.

“With the right support, we know that GPs can provide more preventive care services and greater management and coordination of care, keeping patients healthier and out of hospital.

“But without appropriate funding, our family doctors will be under unreasonable pressure to deliver more with less.

“GPs are incredibly cost-effective. The cost of General Practice is just six per cent of total health expenditure, and a properly funded Medical Home has the potential to both improve patient care and save on more expensive downstream health costs.

“Health played a major part in the Federal Election, and the Government must now demonstrate that it has heard the people’s concerns regarding the ongoing affordability of their health care.

“The Medical Home must be appropriately funded to succeed. Labor promised \$100 million to trial an alternative model, and the Government must consider a similar level of investment if this trial is to succeed.

“The Government must also reverse the Medicare patient rebate freeze and lift future indexation of patient rebates to levels that cover the true cost of providing high quality health services.”

AMA Family Doctor Week is a celebration of the central role played by local GPs in delivering high quality primary health care across Australia.

The theme of Family Doctor Week, 24-30 July 2016, is ‘**Your Family Doctor: Invaluable to your health**’.

As part of Family Doctor Week, the AMA has released a video showcasing the important relationship family doctors have with their patients. To view the video, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVsy1lbplNA&feature=youtu.be>

Follow all the action on Twitter: #amafdw16, #nomedicarefreeze

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