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AGPA Welcomes ACT Liberals Commitment to General Practice

The Australian General Practice Alliance (AGPA) today welcomed the Canberra Liberals election commitments to increase numbers of GPs in the ACT and their re-commitment to exempt payments made to GPs from payroll tax.

The ACT Liberals today announced policies to pay up to \$100,000 of HECS debt for up to 30 new GPs in return for a 5-year commitment to practicing in the ACT, to boost funding for a research chair for General Practice with the ANU Medical School, and to exempt GP payments from payroll tax.

“These are very sensible policies” said Dr John Deery, Chair Australian GP Alliance and Canberra Practice Owner. “We know that one dollar spent in primary health care saves ten dollars of hospital care. These policies have the potential to boost numbers of GPs in Canberra in both the short-term and the longer-term” he said. “Increased numbers of GPs will improve the access to health care for patients. This investment in numbers of GPs will pay dividends for the ACT Government by helping to keep patients out of hospitals. ”

“Exempting GP payments from payroll tax will help to keep costs down for patients. We already have major Practices in the ACT increasing patient charges in anticipation of having to pay this tax, and GPs leaving the ACT for jurisdictions which have taken a more sensible approach. “

Dr Deery said “Two major drivers preventing patients accessing high quality primary healthcare are the numbers of GPs and the cost of patient visit. The GP payroll tax is imposition of an existing tax which has not been imposed previously. It is less than 12 months old and we already seeing the evidence of its negative impacts on both GP numbers and patient costs”

“The provision of legislative reforms and training to allow GPs to diagnose and prescribe for ADHD is a much needed reform, increasing the quality of services from General Practice and reducing pressures on other parts of the health care system”.

“We commend the ACT Liberals for their commitment to General Practice “ Dr Deery said.

Ends

The Australian GP Alliance (AGPA) represents the interests of GP Practice Owners, addressing issues faced by Principal-led General Practices.

The Australian model of GP owned private general practice has been responsible for our international reputation as an efficient and highly effective primary health care service.

The continuation of high quality primary healthcare in Australia is dependent on the continued viability of the Practices that provide the leadership and infrastructure that allows GPs to practice, and patients to access the healthcare system.

For media inquiries or further information, please contact:

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