

30th July, 2009

Chiropractors commend dedication to true health care reform

The Chiropractors' Association of Australia (National) Limited [CAA] supports the National Health and Hospital Reform Commission's [NHHRC] recommendations in its final report "A Healthier Future for all Australians", and believes their implementation will end the pressing need for major healthcare reform, and lead to improved consumer outcomes and their increased empowerment.

The CAA welcomes the NHHRC's recommendation for prevention to become the "platform of healthy communities...integrated into all aspects of [the] healthcare system." The CAA applauds any moves which focus on increasing consumer empowerment with regard to their healthcare decisions. As outlined by NHHRC "individual and collective action" is paramount to building good health and wellbeing for all Australians.

The CAA strongly supports the focus on wellness as critical for driving healthcare reform in Australia.

The CAA has long asserted that maintaining wellness* for Australians is vital to shifting the current focus of the healthcare system from acute care in hospitals to effective primary care.

The CAA is encouraged by the NHHRC's focus on the important role primary health care professionals play in the future of Australian healthcare reform. The CAA particularly welcomes Recommendation 20 which calls for improving the way in which general practitioners, primary healthcare professionals, and other specialists manage the care of people with chronic and complex conditions through shared care arrangements.

The CAA also strongly supports Recommendation 99 – which proposes applying Medicare rebates to relevant diagnostic services referred by nurse practitioners and other health professionals; and for the Medicare Benefits Schedule to apply to specified healthcare professionals in a collaborative team care approach. The CAA believes the implementation of this recommendation will provide Australians unprecedented levels of access to affordable, proven and cost-effective care.

The CAA urges the government to implement the recommendations of the NHHRC as soon as practicable in order that Australians can enjoy improved health outcomes.

Chiropractors look forward to assisting the government in the implementation of the reform process and providing Australians with an opportunity to make informed decisions about their health and to lead healthier lifestyles.

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* The CAA's definition of wellness is as follows: *"Wellness is a lifelong process of assuming personal responsibility that empowers the individual to exercise choice, make informed decisions and take action towards a more balanced, dynamically sustainable and fulfilling existence in all dimensions of life."*