Media Release

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Brisbane, QLD, Friday 15 October 2010

Looking after the physical and oral health of people with severe mental illness

Today, General Practice Queensland (GPQ) is joined by Dr Aaron Groves, Executive Director, Mental Health Directorate Queensland Health to launch the activate: mind & body project at the October 2010 Queensland Divisions Forum, Sofitel Hotel, Gold Coast.

activate: mind & body is a collaborative initiative between General Practice Queensland (GPQ) and Queensland Health. The project is aimed at improving the poor physical and oral health of people with severe mental illness.

Dr John Kastrissios, GPQ Board Director said “Compared to the general population people with severe mental illness have an increased risk of morbidity and mortality due to physical illness”.

“They are often also less likely to receive a physical health review, medication for physical health conditions, preventative health counseling and access to early intervention programs” he said.

A key strategy of the activate: mind & body project is the significant consultation with consumers, carers and health professionals to inform and drive the project.

A consumer representative said “activate: mind & body, right from the first statewide consultation has been inclusive of consumers and carers. It relates to the community sector and general practitioners offering a guide to reach out to people where help is most needed - with healthy people we have a healthy community”.

“For people who may have a lived experience of episodic or severe mental illness activate: mind & body really reflects the theme for Mental Health Week 2010...Get active, be connected to your community and stay involved in your own health” said the consumer representative.
activate: mind & body resources are created specifically for the use of general practitioners, carers and consumers.

Resources launched today for improving the poor physical and oral health of people with severe mental illness includes:

- www.activatemindandbody.com.au - an interactive website with information and resources.
- activate: mind and body handbook – a guide to assist general practitioners to better support and manage the needs of this population.
- Academic Detailing Resource – a behaviour change tool detailing routine physical health checks and health prevention techniques to be undertaken by general practitioners.

ENDS

For further information:
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General Practice Queensland (GPQ) is a peak representative body for 17 divisions of general practice that link approximately 3500 GPs, 1300 General Practices, 1755 Practice Nurses as well as other practice staff and allied health providers in Queensland. For more information visit www.gpqld.com.au

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