Media Release

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Preventative Health Strategy puts general practice at the forefront: Call for the doctor

General practice in Queensland is well placed to be at the forefront in delivering on the Federal Government’s National Preventative Health Strategy (the strategy), says Dr John Kastrissios General Practice Queensland Board Chair.

The strategy focuses on three key health areas - obesity, smoking and alcohol – and reinforces the role of general practice and general practice network programs in delivering preventive health care in these areas.

“Our members work across these preventive areas on a daily basis. It is self-evident that prevention is better than cure,” said Dr Kastrissios.

Increased efforts in preventive health will result in fewer chronic illnesses, less pressure on hospitals and a healthier community.

“Preventive health measures provided by general practice can often result in people who are at high risk of developing a chronic disease such as diabetes or heart disease, avoiding getting the disease,” said Dr Kastrissios.

He said the general practice network runs a number of programs supporting general practice to work towards a healthier community through work with General Practitioners (GPs).

“These programs encourage patients to take control of their own health through staying well with the help of general practice. It’s through these strong relationships that people’s health really starts to improve,” said Dr Kastrissios.

Evidence shows even a brief intervention by a GP – simply asking if a patient has thought about quitting smoking – can result in a patient taking steps to end the habit.

“Even a small measure, in general practice, has a significant impact. This is bread and butter business for our practices, and keeping our community healthy is one of our main objectives,” Dr Kastrissios said.

He said the Queensland Network is ready to roll out future preventive health programs, such as the workplace prevention programs mentioned in the overview.

General Practice Queensland strongly urged the Federal Government to act on the findings of the strategy and begin implementation of it as soon as possible, as the longer it takes to start the worse the health outcomes will be for those Australians who are most in need.

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General Practice Queensland provides strategic leadership, advocacy and representation for its member divisions and general practice.

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