



Dr Ian Kamerman
Chair, The Regional Training Organisations Collaboration (RTOC)

MEDIA RELEASE

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Deliverers of the Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) program welcome Ministers' endorsement of the program

Nine regional training organisations across Australia are the sole deliverers of the AGPT program that trains a new cohort of over 1400 doctors each year to become GPs.

Chair of the Regional Training Organisations Collaboration of Chair and CEOs group (RTOC), Dr Ian Kamerman stated, "The recognition by the Hon Greg Hunt MP and the Hon Mark Coulton MP of the positive impact of Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) over the past two decades is most welcomed."

"It was the vision of then Howard government, and specifically its Health minister and his department, to attract and retain GPs through offering them funded training and placement support to work where they are needed most. It is a credit to this Australian government, and especially the Hon Greg Hunt MP and the Hon Mark Coulton MP that they have steered this program to this encouraging result."

Dr Kamerman said, "Regional training organisations (RTOs) have in partnership with communities, local GPs and training practices sustainably provided the services on the ground to realise this vision, and the legacy of this government is seen in the remarkable achievements for so many more Australians needing safe quality health care now being able to access it close to home. The AGPT is unashamedly community-centric – built to address the needs of diverse communities all across our nation.

"While there was a blip in AGPT applicant numbers when a major restructure was implemented in 2016, those numbers have now recovered. This demonstrates the robustness of the AGPT, the adaptability regional training organisations (RTOs) that deliver it, and the importance of program stability for the practices and trainees. The blip also reminds us that the program does suffer – in terms of applicants and GP training facilities – when significant changes that disrupt their personal and professional lives are mooted or actioned.

"The AGPT has continued to deliver safe, quality training – for GPs by GPs – and at the same time the right quantity, quality and distribution of GPs for communities that may otherwise struggle to attract and retain a GP who delivers affordable, accessible, safe quality care. For more than two decades Australian General Practice Training has been delivered by regionally focussed organisations that listen to the voices of their communities. RTOs have been providing the safe hands that nurture and support doctors in training within general practices throughout Australia.

"The AGPT can do more – and the commitment of the government and the department to a more streamlined engagement with the training facilities, with communities, with the universities and the general practice colleges is very welcomed and essential if we are to see even greater success of the AGPT in attracting and retaining GPs to live and work where they are needed most."

-ENDS

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