



The Royal Australian
College of General
Practitioners

Media release

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RACGP welcomes national electronic records system to combat abuse of prescription drugs

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) commends the federal Health Minister, Tanya Plibersek, on [announcing](#) a new \$5 million national electronic records system to address the dramatic rise in prescription drug abuse and drug diversion.

The new Electronic Recording and Reporting of Controlled Drugs system will be available to doctors, pharmacists and state and territory health authorities across Australia, and will serve as an important step in improving safety and quality in care delivery.

Professor Claire Jackson, RACGP President said having a system in place to monitor the prescribing and dispensing of addictive drugs in real time was a significant step forward in ensuring health professionals and administrators can immediately detect suspected drugs abuse.

“The College welcomes the implementation of a live prescription drug monitoring process and is encouraged to see an increasing focus and investment in e-health initiatives that stand to benefit all Australian communities,” Professor Jackson said.

In its recent [Federal Budget submission](#), the College highlighted ‘medication safety’ as key area requiring attention from government.

The College reiterated the need to establish clinical governance systems for narcotic governance programs in general practice.

“General practitioners (GPs) are often faced with managing patients who have been discharged from hospital into the community without timely communication of their hospital medication discharge plans. Often GPs are unaware whether medications have been ceased on discharge, or if an exit plan to taper and cease the opioid prescription exists.

“The roll out of initiatives such as the new Electronic Recording and Reporting of Controlled Drugs system provides health practitioners with an extremely effective tool in combating the consequences surrounding recurrent issues such as doctor shopping, prescription and supply of drugs of addiction,” Professor Jackson said.

To view more information around the College’s position on medication safety within its pre-budget submission 2012-13, visit www.racgp.org.au/reports/45687.

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About the RACGP

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) is Australia's largest professional general practice organisation and represents urban and rural general practitioners. We represent over 20,000 members working in or towards a career in general practice and are proud that over 18,000 general practitioners in Australia have chosen to be a member of the College. There are over 125 million general practice consultations taking place annually in Australia. Visit www.racgp.org.au.