



**AMA FAMILY DOCTOR WEEK, 23-29 July 2017**

*Your Family Doctor: all about you*

**AMA PAYS TRIBUTE TO ALL AUSTRALIA’S HARDWORKING GPs**

Launching AMA Family Doctor Week 2017 – the AMA’s special annual tribute to all Australia’s hardworking and dedicated GPs – AMA President, Dr Michael Gannon, urged all Australians to establish and maintain a close cooperative relationship with their local family doctor.

Dr Gannon said that having a trusting professional relationship with a GP is the key to good health through all stages of life, for every member of the family.

“GPs are highly skilled health professionals and the cornerstone of quality health care in Australia,” Dr Gannon said.

“They provide expert and personal advice and care to keep people healthy and away from expensive hospital treatment.

“General practice provides outstanding value for every dollar of health expenditure, and deserves greater support from all governments.”

Dr Gannon said that 86 per cent of Australians visit a GP at least once every year, and the average Australian visits their GP around six times each year.

“Around 80 per cent of patients have a usual GP, which is the best way to manage your health throughout life,” Dr Gannon said.

“Your usual GP will be able to provide comprehensive care – with immediate access to your medical history and a long-term understanding of your health care needs, including things like allergies or medications.

“Family doctors are the highest trained general health professionals, with a minimum of 10 to 15 years training.

“They are the only health professionals trained to diagnose undifferentiated conditions and provide holistic care from the cradle to the grave

“Your GP, your family doctor, is all about you.

“When you are worried about your health, or just want to know how to take better care of your health, you should talk to your GP.”

Dr Gannon said that the specialised work of GPs is in great demand due to the growing and ageing population, and because of health conditions that result from our contemporary lifestyles and diets.

“The importance of quality primary health care and preventive health advice has never been higher due to our modern way of life,” Dr Gannon said.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW):

- 45 per cent of Australians are not active enough for a healthy lifestyle;
- 95 per cent of Australians do not eat the recommended servings per day of fruit and vegetables;
- 63 per cent of Australians are overweight or obese;
- 27 per cent of Australians have a chronic disease;
- 21 per cent of Australians have two or more chronic diseases; and
- 20 per cent of Australians have had a mental disorder in the past 12 months.

“Our hardworking local GPs – our family doctors – are the key to better physical and mental health for all Australians,” Dr Gannon said.

“They provide quality expert health advice and help patients navigate their way through the health system to achieve the most appropriate care and treatment for their condition.

“Join the AMA in acknowledging their great work during Family Doctor Week.”

Follow all the FDW action on Twitter: #amafdw17

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23 July 2017

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