



MEDIA RELEASE

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Dietitians: Hospital reform welcome but governance must include health professionals from all sectors

The Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) today welcomed Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's proposed hospital reform package. But the Association warned that without a multidisciplinary approach to implementing the reforms the Government risked 'missing the mark' in meeting patient needs.

Chief Executive Officer of the DAA, Claire Hewat, said: "The move to hospitals being managed by Local Hospital Networks, rather than Hospital Boards, is very welcome. But these Networks must have representatives from across the health disciplines, including allied health, nurses and doctors, to reflect the reality of health care in Australia.

"Allied health professionals and nurses have the most day-to-day contact with patients and are intimately involved in their care and recovery. So they must play a key role in the day-to-day operational decisions of hospitals and have a say in deciding who is accountable for health outcomes."

Ms Hewat said the Australian Government's hospital reform is a step in the right direction, but other equally important health issues should not be lost in the 'noise'.

"Preventative health care, aged care, undersupply of suitably qualified health professionals and electronic health records are key issues the Government is yet to address. DAA looks forward to announcements of initiatives to address these, because without changes in these areas, hospital reform will only be a band-aid solution," said Ms Hewat.

For further information or to speak with Claire Hewat, contact Romy Hurwitz, Dietitians Association of Australia, on 0409 661 920.

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Note to Editors: The Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) is the professional body representing dietitians nationally. Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) is the only national credential recognised by the Australian Government, Medicare, the Department of Veterans Affairs and most private health funds as the quality standard for nutrition and dietetics services in Australia. For more information visit www.daa.asn.au