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WentWest Limited

For further information:

Carolyn Massingham

Marketing and Communications Team Leader

M 0412 979 736

E media@wentwest.com.au

MEDIA RELEASE

Focus on the Future - GP Workforce in the ACT and NSW

The ACT and NSW Primary Health Networks (PHNs) will play a key role in the distribution of the GP trainee workforce after being awarded a grant through the Australian Government's Health Workforce Program.

ACT PHN CEO and consortium lead for this work Megan Cahill said the 11 ACT and NSW PHNs will provide advice on the priority locations for GP training placements to meet current and future GP workforce needs, through the Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) Program GP Workforce Planning and Prioritisation grant. This work will make a vital contribution to the future of GP training.

"The PHN's advice will inform the distribution of the GP trainee workforce across communities in the ACT and NSW and support the transition to college-led GP training. It will also enable greater visibility of training opportunities to support GP trainees to undertake their training and acquire the skills to meet community health needs. The distribution approach under the College-led model deliberately provides a level of flexibility in how registrar distribution is achieved to ensure that placement decisions support a safe and positive registrar experience," said Ms Cahill.

PHNs will use their well-established relationships with local general practices and stakeholders to map the existing and future general practitioner and trainee workforce in each GP catchment area.

Ray Messom, Chair of the NSW and ACT PHN Consortium and CEO of the Western Sydney PHN, said, *"To ensure that all communities have access to timely, quality care, we must address current GP workforce issues and pinpoint the locations where there are gaps in GP availability. By analysing current and forecasting future need, we have the opportunity to inform priority areas for GP training placements and build a more resilient, sustainable primary care workforce"*.

The AGPT Program trains doctors in general practice who can then work as GPs anywhere in Australia. The three to four-year training program offers 1,500 training places each year under a competitive merit-based process. GP Training will be delivered by the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) from February 2023.

"PHNs are well placed to provide this advice. We've supported our primary care workforce and established highly effective stakeholder relationships across the health system since 2015. We have deeply embedded working relationships with general practice and have also conducted comprehensive Health Needs Assessments to determine the health and service needs of the population and health care system within our catchment regions," said Ms Cahill.