

Media Release

Murray Primary Health Network announced

11 April 2015

Federal Minister for Health Sussan Ley has announced today that Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local has been selected to establish the Murray Primary Health Network (PHN) for operation from 1 July 2015.

The Murray Primary Health Network region spans the expansive northern Victoria area from Mildura to Woodend and eastward to Wodonga including Albury. This region incorporates approximately 100,000 square km's and has a population base of over 520,000 people.

After a review of Medicare Local's in 2014, the Federal Government invited applications from organisations to establish the 30 Primary Health Networks across Australia.

Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local collaborated with a range of public and private organisations and submitted an application to establish and operate the Murray Primary Health Network in January this year.

Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local Chief Executive Officer Matt Jones said that the key objectives of the Murray Primary Health Network are to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of primary health services for patients, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes; and to improve co-ordination of care to ensure patients receive the right care in the right place at the right time.

"The Murray Primary Health Network will achieve its objectives by understanding health care needs through engagement with local communities and will develop opportunities for the primary care system and general practice particularly to enhance the provision of community based care.

"Through co-ordinated support and a greater focus upon integration and collaboration, the primary care system can reduce the demand upon acute services and emergency department presentations. Whilst that is clearly a good outcome for the health system, more broadly it is a better solution for our communities and the people that live in our region", said Mr Jones.

"The scale of the Murray Primary Health Network provides opportunities to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the primary health care system across the region but importantly these solutions will be developed and implemented through a sub-regional structure. The success of the Murray Primary Health Network will lie in the ability to have staff and capability distributed throughout the region, supporting the implementation of solutions that recognise and incorporate the specific issues relevant to each sub-region.

"Central to our efforts will be service continuity, incorporation and strengthening of the existing capability of the primary care system, and enabling greater innovation and system improvements to benefit communities in the region", he said.

Medicare Locals will continue to operate until 30 June 2015, after which time the new Murray Primary Health Network begins operation. Planning is underway to ensure a smooth transition of services.

Media contact

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