



Katy Gallagher MLA
DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER
TREASURER
MINISTER FOR HEALTH
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

MEMBER FOR MOLONGLO

MEDIA RELEASE

MR42H

British GPs encouraged to Live in Canberra

ACT Minister for Health, Katy Gallagher MLA, announced today that the ACT Government had begun a targeted advertising campaign to attract GPs from the United Kingdom.

“Full page advertisements will appear in the UK’s British Journal of General Practice over a three month period, encouraging GPs to consider moving to Canberra to achieve a better work-life balance,” Ms Gallagher said.

“The UK has been selected for this campaign due to the relative ease of having British medical qualifications recognised in Australia,” she said.

“The *Live in Canberra* program works to help address areas of skilled shortage in the ACT, and spreads the message of the benefits of living and working in Canberra. *Live in Canberra* is working in partnership with the ACT Division of General Practice and ACT Health to get the message out to GPs about the benefits of living and working in the Australian capital.

“The advertisement, while showcasing some of the lifestyle benefits of living in Canberra, encourages interested GPs to contact the ACT Division of General Practice, or visit www.liveincanberra.com.au,” Ms Gallagher said.

South African GP Dr Kotie Swart and her family made the move to Canberra in 2008 after meeting with the *Live in Canberra* team at an expo in South Africa in 2007, and they have found that Canberra has exceeded all their expectations.

“Canberra is a real oasis and a great place to live as a family because the people are friendly and relaxed. Canberra has fantastic schools and universities, and the medical facilities are great,” Dr Swart said.

This is the second time the *Live in Canberra* program has specifically targeted GPs in the UK, with a three month advertising campaign in *The Lancet* last year leading to hundreds of visits to the Division of General Practice’s website and a number of expressions of interest. Interest was generated not only from the UK, but also from the US, India, Canada, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, and Italy.

In addition to these international recruitment efforts, the ACT Government has implemented a range of other initiatives to address the GP shortage including the employment of a GP Marketing and Support Advisor and the provision of \$12 million over four years to fund a number of programs including:

- scholarships for ANU Medical School students who commit to undertaking training and returning to work in the region;
- Teaching Incentive Payments for general practitioners who support undergraduate clinical training;
- a GP Development Fund providing one-off incentive payments to GP practices for initiatives that attract and retain staff, establish new services, and improve access to general practice; and
- a business-hours aged care GP service to provide care to elderly residents of aged care facilities or residents who are housebound to reduce pressure on GP practices, after-hours services and hospital emergency departments.

“Live in Canberra will also distribute information to GPs at upcoming National Careers and Employment Expos to be held around Australia during May and June 2010,” Ms Gallagher said.

Statement Ends

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