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MEDIA RELEASE

## Victoria's Collaborative Care Cluster Goes National

- Over 10,000 chronically ill Australians using new chronic disease management system
- Trials showing significant improvement in quality of care and effectiveness
- Practice incomes increased by more than \$35,000 per GP
- Keeping people with diabetes, asthma and arthritis out of hospital
- Reducing Australia's \$60 billion chronic care costs

The juggling act of managing chronic illness has been streamlined for 10,000 patients, 1,000 GPs and nearly 3,000 allied health professionals.

Today the Victorian Health Minister David Davis announced that, following the successful pilot of the Collaborative Care Cluster Australia (CCCA) project, CCCA is now set to go national.

CCCA uses the Victorian-developed **cdmNet** service to enable the care team to go online and share patient information, email referrals and manage medications. It also produces the necessary documentation automatically, sets reminders for reviews and flags alerts, such as patient allergies—all at the touch of a button.

The Minister urged all Victorian pharmacists, patients with chronic conditions and their carers to come on board, and join with GPs, specialists and healthcare professionals to embrace innovative technologies like **cdmNet**, which can transform the outcomes of chronic health management, reduce costs and improve quality of life.

"The digital revolution has already transformed how we keep in touch with friends, how we do business, book travel, buy music and much more" says Professor Michael Georgeff, CEO of Precedence Health Care. "It's time we used these same technologies to deliver better health care, more effectively, to more Australians."

More than seven million Australians have a chronic illness, representing a \$60 billion burden on Australia's health care system. GPs oversee the chronic disease management of their patients, collaborating with specialists, pharmacists and other allied health professionals using care plans funded by Medicare. Regular reviews are vitally important for tracking the patient's condition, ensuring they continue to have the best care and preventing declines that can lead to hospitalisation, blindness, and limb amputation.

"We are offering a more efficient way for general practitioners to liaise with other members of the care team, particularly those that are outside the general practice" says Professor Georgeff.

"**cdmNet** reduces the need for manual or complicated ways of making records. It drives efficiency for the GP, does the paperwork, helps prepare billing and frees

them up to spend more time with the patient” says Jason Trethowan, CEO of Barwon Medicare Local.

Independent university trials of CCCA technologies and **cdmNet** are already showing improvements in quality of care.

“The system was first trialled in Geelong with diabetes patients and in Melbourne’s South East, involving eight chronic illnesses” says Professor Leon Piterman AM, Pro Vice-Chancellor Monash University (Berwick and Peninsula).

“We are now able to demonstrate that it improves adherence to the care plan and follow up of the plan. This leads to definite improvements in the control of diabetes, blood pressure, blood sugar, blood lipids and so on. We are seeing improvements in the clinical condition of diabetes patients and cardiovascular risk factors associated with diabetes” he says.

Rural Tasmanian GP Dr Myrle Gray says many of her chronic care patients have embraced **cdmNet** enthusiastically. “They like getting the reminders too, they enjoy it. It gives them a sense that they’re on top of their care plan. I have one 75-year old lady who told me that her son is getting her an iPad. She said she’s looking forward to accessing her plan on it”.

CCCA partners include Precedence Health Care, Fred Health, Cisco Systems, Monash University, the Australian E-Health Research Centre (CSIRO), Baker IDI, Southern Health, Royal District Nursing Service, South Eastern Melbourne Medicare Local, Bupa, Diabetes Australia, and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

CCCA is supported by funding from the Victorian Government. **cdmNet** is supported by funding from the Australian Government’s Digital Regions Initiative.

### **Further information**

**Professor Michael Georgeff**  
**CEO Precedence Health Care**  
**Mobile + 61 411 193 247**  
**Office +61 3 9023 0800 during business hours**