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# ***MEDIA RELEASE***

## **Prevention and Carers: Local Role**

The Rudd government is to be congratulated for taking the first step in coordinating healthcare funding across Australia and giving local management more control. It also forms a base for addressing other issues such as medical standards, government funding for private hospitals, the links between private and public services and also salary discrepancies (and hence the balance of expertise) between the two. The education and increased recruitment of future doctors and nurses also needs to be increased.

“But even then it only benefits those who use established health care services, not those who are often the most in need and who for many reasons do not access them, depending instead on informal and overworked carers” said Darian Hiles of the United Party.

“In addition, we must not lose our focus on **reducing the need** for treatment. Unhealthy food and lifestyles, obesity, air pollution, toxic land, unnecessary stress, lack of adequate care for those in need and inadequate and misleading information given to the public all contribute to unnecessary illness and the resulting high load on our healthcare system” he said.

Rudd's announcement will move the local focus to carers and the prevention of unnecessary illness, as it makes clearer that these are on the shoulders of local and State authorities. “At last we can move seriously to the next stage” Mr Hiles said. “The United Party accepts this Federal Government role for funding hospitals. Local and State governments must now turn their attention to the local management of healthcare and addressing the causes of illness in the community”.

“Ultimately prevention is the most important step we have to take, and this is clearly a local issue” he said.

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