



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **\$5-million GP Super Clinic means new era in health-care for Blue Mountains**

The Blue Mountains community is the winner as Balance! Healthcare is awarded a pivotal role in the region as part of Commonwealth Government's national rollout for its GP Super Clinics Program. Balance! Healthcare is a strong consortium of partners, including local doctors and other primary care health professionals with complementary skills.

In fulfilling the focus of this ground-breaking \$5-million health initiative, the Blue Mountains GP Super Clinic will bring together general practitioners, nurses, medical specialists, allied health professionals and other health care providers to deliver a new concept in integrated health care, tailored to the needs, priorities, and geographical realities, of Blue Mountains residents.

The chairman of Balance! Healthcare is Dr John Aloizos AM, a General Practitioner for 31 years, who was the inaugural Chair, Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd (ADGP, now known as AGPN) and is currently Chairman of Quality in Practice (QIP), the leading provider of quality improvement and accreditation services to support primary care practice teams.

Dr Aloizos says "The team is absolutely delighted to be the successful applicant, and we intend to create a best practice multi-disciplinary clinic that meets the needs of the local community. We are committed to extending the current services in the area, and working with other practices to assist patients improve their health".

"The Balance! Healthcare solution has been tailored to the needs and priorities of Blue Mountains residents" said CEO Ms Kate Gunn. "It's a hub and spoke model that creates a network of intra-linked centres offering collocated services along a geographically dispersed population ridgeline".

Ms Gunn, who combines close family ties in this area with a commitment to multi-disciplinary health, was speaking alongside her business partner Ms Karen Crouch. Together they head a capable and experienced team of local, as well and out-of-area, doctors committed to providing an integrated, patient-centred-approach.

“To get things underway, initial set-up will be Katoomba and Blackheath, while our main hub for the GP Super Clinic will be purpose-built at Springwood. In addition to collocated allied health services at the hub, and at both Katoomba and Blackheath, local allied health spokes will be located between Blackheath and Blaxland. There is also a medical specialist spoke at Katoomba.

Plans for the Blue Mountains GP Super Clinic have been developed after much community consultation, and include close collaboration with various community groups. With \$5-million Commonwealth funding now confirmed, Balance! Healthcare will have its first phase open at Katoomba in mid-year, followed by Blackheath in Spring and other “spokes” soon thereafter. It is anticipated that the Springwood hub will be operational in the second half of 2010.

Potential partners, practitioners, staff and intending patients of the Blue Mountains GP Super Clinic are invited to register pre-interest on 1300 854 340.

GP Super Clinics are a \$275 million commitment of the Rudd Government.

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