

MEDIA RELEASE

Healthways to Provide Telephonic Health Coaching for NSW Chronic Disease Patients

1 February 2011 – Following the completion of its tender, NSW Health has awarded Healthways Australia the contract to provide out-sourced Telephonic Health Coaching services for their *Connecting Care (Severe Chronic Disease Management Program)*.

The *Connecting Care Program* is a statewide initiative that links general practice, specialist medical, acute hospital, and community health services to provide patient-focused and team-based coordinated care for people with complex chronic diseases; and who have a high risk of being admitted to hospital.

Telephonic Health Coaching is an evidence-based model of care delivered by trained health professionals to influence positive behaviour change, reinforce clinical best practice, and subsequently improve a patient's health. It provides guidance, education and support for patients to better understand their condition, and reinforce medical and health recommendations. Telephonic Health Coaching is specifically effective at reducing the rate of hospitalisation for patients with chronic disease through improved health outcomes.

NSW Health aims to enrol approximately 43,000 individuals with chronic and complex care needs who are at a high risk of being hospitalised, of which it is estimated around 36,000 may be suitable for a telephone-based health coaching service.

People eligible for enrolment in the *Connecting Care Program* are:

- Adults aged over 18 years or aged over 15 years if they are Aboriginal; and
- Are at high risk of unplanned hospital admissions; and
- Have one of the following five chronic diseases:
 - Diabetes;
 - Congestive Heart Failure;
 - Coronary Artery Disease;
 - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease; and
 - Hypertension (High blood pressure).

The Telephonic Health Coaching service enables a patient to gain a fuller understanding of their chronic disease, the impact of behaviour on the disease and methods of managing risk factors in a positive way.

“We are looking forward to working with NSW Health, the Local Hospital Networks, the patients and their GPs to deliver this service”, Healthways Australia Managing Director, Mr. Timothy Morphy said.

“Proactive telephonic health coaching supports patients to better manage their chronic diseases we would like to recognise the NSW Government for their leadership in this area”, he said.

A critical aspect of the Healthways Australia Telephonic Health Coaching program is to work with and support GPs as they diagnose and treat patients.

“Our goal is to ensure GPs have a clear understanding of their patients’ progress and improvement on our Telephonic Health Coaching program; and to work with them in helping their patients to manage their chronic disease more effectively”, Mr. Morphy said.

“A recently published study in *Population Health Management* has shown participants with coronary artery disease, heart failure, diabetes, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in our telephonic health coaching program showed the hospital admission rate had decreased by 6.2% compared with a 14.9% increase in the unsupported group”, he said.

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About Healthways

Healthways is a population health company providing personalised wellness, prevention and disease management programs. Since its foundation in 1981, Healthways has been working with and assisting governments, employers, health insurers, hospitals, doctors and above all, individuals; to improve the effectiveness of healthcare and reduce healthcare costs through large-scale health programs adapted and tailored for the local health system. Globally one of the largest providers of population health management, Healthways provides ongoing health analysis and services for over 35 million individuals worldwide in Australia, Europe, North and South America. Visit www.healthways.com for more information.