

New GP program to improve patient care

The lot of people with chronic health problems, such as diabetes and heart disease, was set to improve as a result of a new system developed by Canberra researchers.

The program would provide general practitioners with more in-depth information about their patient's progress, according to Dr Beverly Sibthorpe, of the Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute at the Australian National University.

The federal Health Department had commissioned the ANU-based centre to devise a patient-centred approach.

"The new program will offer GPs support by

giving them feedback on patient progress backed up by educational programs offered by their division networks," Dr Sibthorpe said.

The chief executive of the Southern Highlands Division of General Practice, Dr Warwick Ruscoe, said the program had improved the care of patients with diabetes and would now be rolled out to cardiovascular care.

"GPs welcome the program because it allows them to measure their performance against that of the other practices in the area and provides a scientifically valid measure of care outcomes," Dr Ruscoe said.