



Australian GPs upskill with dermatologists

Australian dermatologists have responded enthusiastically to calls from the medical profession for them to share their special skills, with a dermatology workshop for GPs held last weekend with great success.

The Australasian College of Dermatologists (ACD), in conjunction with the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) put together a unique dermatological training program, which had its second “very hands-on” teaching session last weekend.

ACD Honorary Secretary, Dr Stephen Shumack says that the teaching sessions were universally well-received by the teachers, the GP registrants and the educational staff from RACGP and the ACD.

“Thirteen dermatologists assisted 64 GPs from around Australia to learn new skills in key areas of dermatology,” says Dr Shumack.

“The sessions comprised a series of lectures on the management of skin cancer, small group discussion, and “hands-on experience”, practicing dermatologic surgery with dermatologists as tutors, looking at issues such as excisions, repairs, skin flaps and grafts.

“These are the skills which the GPs particularly want, since they aren’t offered anywhere else,” says Dr Shumack.

“The low teacher to student ratio meant that all GPs had a great chance to practice their skills.

“This is the only dermatology course for GPs which involves a practical weekend workshop of dermatological surgery and practical procedures – and the only course which is officially endorsed by all three colleges: the ACD, the ACRRM and the RACGP.

“We have seen great demand for this course amongst GPs, as very little dermatology is taught at undergraduate medical school level or during the hospital intern training years.”

The weekend workshops are held after the candidates have undertaken four online modules, which are case-based and include video demonstrations of a range of surgical procedures. The online modules and workshop are followed by ten practical training sessions during a clinical attachment with a dermatologist.

It is anticipated that there will be another intake into the course in the second half of this year. Interested participants should contact the RACGP or the ACRRM to express their interest in enrolling.

