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## Skin Cancer Detection Up-skilling for GPs

Australia's GPs now have an opportunity to become more qualified in the detection and treatment of skin cancers.

And given that Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer - melanoma - in the world, Australia's leading organisation for the detection and treatment of all skin diseases, the Australasian College of Dermatologists (ACD), has been directly involved in the initiation of a new accredited skin cancer course for general practitioners.

In association with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), the comprehensive training course is now available to all GPs, delivering a practical course on dermatology and skin cancer detection and treatment.

The Honorary Secretary of the ACD, Dr Stephen Shumack, says there has been an increasingly heightened awareness among the general public of the risks and dangers associated with sun exposure and melanoma.

"This, in turn, has led to an upswing in patients requesting skin checks with skin cancer clinics, GPs and dermatologists, contributing to longer waiting lists," says Dr Shumack.

"Coupled with a growing number of requests from GPs regarding the need to up-skill their knowledge and management of dermatological problems, the ACD initiated the development of the course in order to address their needs and provide improved dermatological care."

Dermatological problems comprise 10-20% of all GP consultations and until now, there has been no widely available course for GPs in Australia to up-skill them in the management of common dermatological conditions.

Dr Shumack says GPs are on the front line of skin cancer detection and treatment.

"One of the aims of this course is to provide GPs with the necessary confidence to reassure patients requesting a skin check that they are able to successfully perform the service themselves," says Dr Shumack.

A number of GPs from rural and remote centres are already taking part in a pilot program which comprises an online training component, a weekend surgical workshop and training in a dermatological practice for GPs throughout the country.

“The feedback on the course, to date, has been excellent and we encourage GPs, especially in rural and regional Australia where access to specialists is limited, to consider the course in order to up-skill in the diagnosis of skin cancer.

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#### MEDIA INQUIRIES

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