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## CALLS FOR SAFER SOLARIUMS AND SUNBEDS

Australia's leading organisation for the diagnosis and treatment of all skin diseases, the Australasian College of Dermatologists (ACD), is supporting calls for tighter regulation of the burgeoning solarium industry.

It follows a story aired on the ABC's '7.30 Report' regarding 25 year old Clare Oliver, who claims she has melanoma because of the frequent number of visits she made to solariums.

The Honorary Secretary of the ACD, Dr Stephen Shumack, says recent international studies have demonstrated a direct link between the use of sunbeds and skin cancer.

"Young people who get burnt from exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UV) have a far greater risk of developing potentially deadly melanoma," says Dr Shumack.

The number of solariums in Australia has increased by 300% over the last decade, and according to Melbourne's Peter MacCallum Institute, melanoma is the most common form of cancer in the 15 to 30 age group.

"Young people need to get the message there is no such thing as a 'safe tan'. Some sunbeds have the capacity to emit levels of ultraviolet radiation many times stronger than the midday sun.

"There is currently no government regulation in relation to solarium operations and in an industry that's becoming increasingly competitive, a voluntary code of standards is not enough to protect skin, one of our most vital and fragile organs.

Dr Shumack says those who are more interested in the short-term appearance of a suntan than the long term-term health of their bodies run the very real risk of becoming another deadly melanoma statistic.

"It's an industry that's growing out of control and it's about time that Federal and State Governments acted on it," says Dr Shumack.

