



MEDIA RELEASE

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STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES FOR BETTER SKIN HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS

Australasian College of Dermatologists launches 'Innovate' Reconciliation Action Plan

Today the Australasian College of Dermatologists (ACD) launches its second Reconciliation Action Plan. ACD's new ['Innovate' Reconciliation Action Plan](#), endorsed by Reconciliation Australia, reflects the College's commitment to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to achieve positive change and equity in skin health outcomes.

"As the medical college and peak membership organisation for dermatologists in Australia, the ACD is uniquely placed to work to address the skin health disparities that exist between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians" says ACD President Dr Clare Tait.

"We believe reconciliation and actively improving diversity within our own workforce enriches those efforts – that we can achieve more together".

Based on the central themes of relationships, respect and opportunities, the Innovate RAP provides the next steps in ACD's reconciliation journey. "It will see us strengthen our approach to reconciliation through business activities, services and programs, and develop mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders" Dr Tait said.

"Our Innovate RAP provides a clear plan for accelerating our effort to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement and perspectives in our governance and stakeholder engagement; to building skills and understanding to recognise and respond to the needs of patients and communities with cultural sensitivity and clinical expertise; to addressing inequitable access to dermatology services and disparities in skin health outcomes; and to fostering the First Nations specialist dermatology workforce.

"Over the past two years we have graduated four First Nations dermatologists – each of whom are making incredible contributions to our profession, to the way we work as a College, and to the communities they serve. Our relationships with First Nations health organisations such as the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA) and Leaders in Indigenous Medical Education (LIME) have been instrumental in informing our positive actions in recruitment, progression and support, and we look forward to continuing to work together and nurturing new relationships.

At the same time, we are acutely aware that we remain a long way from achieving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. To make significant changes, as a College we need to continue on the journey we have started. Our Innovate RAP provides the mechanism to do this" Dr Tait said.

"Our new RAP coincides with the commencement of our new curriculum with a renewed focus on ensuring our trainees graduate with the knowledge, competencies, skills and experience to deliver culturally and clinically safe care for First Nations peoples and that our First Nations trainees can learn and work in an environment of respect. We look forward to working together to achieve this."

The Australasian College of Dermatologists acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of lands, seas and waters throughout Australia, and pays respect to Elders past, present and future. We acknowledge the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We recognise that the health and social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are grounded in continued connection to culture, country, language and community.

About the Australasian College of Dermatologists

The Australasian College of Dermatologists is the sole medical college accredited by the Australian Medical Council for the training and continuing professional development of medical practitioners in the specialty of dermatology.

It is the leading authority in Australia for dermatology, providing information, advocacy and advice to individuals, communities, government and other health stakeholders on skin health and dermatological practice.

Dermatology is the area of medicine that deals with the skin including the hair and nails. Dermatologists are medical specialists trained in the diagnosis, treatment and management of all skin diseases including skin cancer.

As the national peak membership organisation, the College represents 590 specialist dermatologist Fellows (FACD) and 100 trainees across the country.

Links to further information

Visit the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement pages on the ACD website to find out more about the College's commitment to reconciliation.

<https://www.dermcoll.edu.au/about/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-engagement/>

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