

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
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28 March 2014

Dear Committee Secretary

Public Health Association of Australia submission: Inquiry into skin cancer in Australia

The Public Health Association of Australia Incorporated (PHAA) is recognised as the principal non-government organisation for public health in Australia and works to promote the health and well-being of all Australians. The Association seeks better population health outcomes based on prevention, the social determinants of health and equity principles. PHAA is a national organisation comprising around 1900 individual members and representing over 40 professional groups concerned with the promotion of health at a population level.

Key roles of the organisation include the development of policy, capacity building and advocacy. Core to our work is an evidence base drawn from a wide range of members working in public health practice, research, administration and related fields who volunteer their time to inform policy, support advocacy and assist in capacity building within the sector. PHAA supports a preventive approach for better population health outcomes by championing appropriate policies and providing strong support for Australian governments and bodies such as the National Health and Medical Research Council in their efforts to develop and strengthen research and actions in public health.

PHAA has Branches in every State and Territory and a wide range of Special Interest Groups. The Branches work with the National Office in providing policy advice, in organising seminars and public events and in mentoring public health professionals. This work is based on the agreed policies of the PHAA. Our Special Interest Groups provide specific expertise, peer review and professionalism in assisting the National Organisation to respond to issues and challenges as well as providing a close involvement in the development of policies.

PHAA welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health's Inquiry into skin cancer in Australia. In particular we wish to have input to the terms of reference in relation to 'strategies to enhance early diagnosis' and 'effective strategies for prevention'. PHAA has a comprehensive *Skin Cancer Prevention Policy* that promotes the development of a coordinated national approach to prevention and early detection of skin cancer.

PHAA's policy recommends a number of specific measures, including that:

1. A national ban on solariums be supported by relevant health bodies and key decision makers.
2. Funding continues to be allocated to implement, maintain and evaluate comprehensive skin cancer prevention and early detection programs throughout Australia.

3. Uniform national skin cancer classification and reporting processes continue to be supported in Australia, alongside nationally adopted surveillance guidelines relating to those at higher risk than the general population.

PHAA's *Skin Cancer Prevention Policy* is attached for the information of the Committee.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input to the Committee's inquiry and would be pleased to provide further information – and/or appear before the Committee at a hearing - to elaborate on the issues raised in the attached document.

Yours sincerely



Melanie Walker
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Public Health Association of Australia