



MEDIA RELEASE

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SUPPORTING ACCESS TO CARE – AUSTRALIA’S FIRST ABORIGINAL DERMATOLOGISTS CONFERRED BY AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF DERMATOLOGISTS

Australia’s first Aboriginal dermatologists took part in the conferring ceremony of the Australasian College of Dermatologists (ACD) at the Adelaide Convention Centre last night.

This is the first time in Australia such a high number of First Nations graduates have conferred together in a medical specialty, with four graduates participating in the ceremony.

The graduates, Dr Dana Slape, Dr Crystal Williams, Dr Artiene Tatian and Dr Tom Barrett were officially presented with their graduation certificates at the conferring ceremony attended by special guest Dr Kelvin Kong.

As part of the ACD’s aim to improve the diversity of the dermatology workforce and increase access to care for under-serviced communities, ACD introduced a suite of initiatives to encourage First Nations doctors who meet the other requirements of selection to specialise in the field of dermatology.

“We are proud to be the first specialist college to have such a number of First Nations dermatologists conferring together” ACD President Dr Clare Tait said.

“The majority of these graduates have come through our Federally-funded designated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specialist training program position which opens up opportunities for First Nations doctors with a strong commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

This is part of a suite of positive recruitment and support strategies aimed at increasing the diversity of our workforce and helping to close the gap by providing better access to care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities” Dr Tait said.

Providing access to care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is part of the ACD’s agenda to achieve equitable health outcomes for all. Having First Nations doctors supporting these communities helps in achieving this goal.

“Our First Nations dermatologists are actively engaged and working with communities that have been underrepresented when it comes to access to care and are leading the way in delivery of culturally safe models of care” Dr Tait said.

Part of the work being achieved by these specialists includes the establishment of a First Nations Teledermatology service in Victoria; the establishment of a new community-based hospital dermatology service in Yilli Rreung (greater Darwin); providing outreach services in Darwin and Katherine; active involvement in international and national medical boards and committees; delivering care to the communities of South Western Sydney; and initiating delivery of dermatology care in the NSW prison system.



“The instrumental gains in dermatological care to underserved Australians provided by our First Nations Fellows is something we are deeply proud of. There are many historical, cultural and social reasons First Nations Australians may not receive good, holistic dermatological care.

These Fellows have harnessed the opportunities of ACD’s positive recruitment strategy and have in a very short amount of time given back effectively to many communities in need” Associate Professor Erin McMeniman, Co-Chair of the ACD Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Committee said.

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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.

For more information or to arrange an interview with the Australasian College of Dermatologists, or one of our dermatologists, please contact:

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