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MEDIA RELEASE

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M5 Project online health risk assessment tool gets men fighting for their health

The M5 Project, an initiative of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), has introduced a new online health risk assessment tool aimed at getting men to take an active role in focusing on their health and wellbeing.

M5 HEALTH ONLINE is designed to engage men with a personalised experience that includes targeted health information and interactive risk assessments, coupled with professional ongoing support and advice. It provides clear and concise information on diseases and conditions, as well as wellness and lifestyle issues. The unique factor about the program is its ability to track and monitor behavioural change and encourage men to maintain their own health and wellbeing in a user-friendly and interactive format, keeping men motivated with interesting facts and resources, to-do lists and interactive tools and calculators.

RACGP President Dr Chris Mitchell said that M5 HEALTH ONLINE will allow men of all ages to access information tailored to their individual needs to better manage their health, prevent future illness and live healthier, happier lives.

“The task of getting Australian men to focus on their health is not an easy one as many men simply don’t look after themselves, don’t talk about their health with their mates and don’t have a local doctor that they visit to discuss health concerns.

“GPs are skilled and well trained to deliver comprehensive, coordinated care over time. As it is their GP that most men first turn to for comprehensive care, there are a number of ways that GPs can encourage men to better access their services, such as developing a consultation style that supports male specific communication and using concrete examples of healthcare and surveys to identify concerns,” he said.

The RACGP has attempted to address many of the ongoing issues surrounding men’s health through their ongoing men’s health initiatives, including the M5 Project.

The M5 Project encourages males to take five key preventive steps to improve their health:

1. Share your family history with your GP
2. Know your healthy weight
3. Check your blood pressure
4. Stop smoking – it’s the only healthy option
5. Maintain a healthy mind and a healthy body.

Dr Mitchell said that with Men’s Health Week occurring next week (from 14 – 20 June) it is timely to remind men that small changes in their lifestyle can mean big

improvements in their health and benefits not only for themselves, but for their loved ones.

“With research showing that men are more likely to eat food high in fat, exercise less after the age of 35, drink alcohol in excessive amounts, smoke, use illicit drugs and not admit to experiencing emotional stress, men’s health issues will not disappear any time soon. It is crucial for GPs to ensure they continue to do all they can to address the specific issues facing men when it comes to their health, for both their individual patients and the wider community,” he said.

For more information about the M5 Project and M5 HEALTH ONLINE, visit www.m5project.com.au.

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About the RACGP

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) sets and maintains the standards for quality clinical practice, education and training, and research in Australian general practice, and represents Australia's urban and rural general practitioners. Visit www.racgp.org.au.