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THE M5 PROJECT
MEN'S PREVENTIVE HEALTH



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

New policy puts men's health back on the agenda

College's "top 5 health tips for men" recognised

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) congratulates the Federal Government on the launch of Australia's first National Male Health Policy. The new policy provides a framework for improving the health of all males and achieving equal health outcomes for population groups of males at risk of poor health.

Dr Chris Mitchell, RACGP President and GP in Northern New South Wales, said that he was really pleased with the National Male Health Policy as it recognises that health issues need to take a multi-sectoral approach.

"To improve men's health in Australia, there needs to be a coordinated approach across a number of sectors such as health, educational and community organisations.

"The new policy is consistent with the RACGP Men's Health Policy and the RACGP Curriculum for Australian General Practice, the basis for training Australian GPs," Dr Mitchell said.

The National Male Health Policy includes case studies of projects that were successful in improving men's health such as the men's sheds initiative and The M5 Project.

The M5 Project is managed by the RACGP, as GPs are at the forefront of dealing with men's health issues each day. This initiative has drawn together a diverse group of health organisations all focused on ensuring men live long and rich lives. The Australian Government has provided funding support to the RACGP to develop and build on the M5 project.

The M5 project recognises that men tend to present later with health problems, visit their GP less frequently and when they do, they have shorter consultations and are less likely to come in for preventative health checks.

"It is clear that we need to get men talking and make them more comfortable to visit a GP and once there, communicate in a way that encourages them to open up and ask the real questions that are bothering them," said Dr Mitchell.

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

- Share your family history with your GP
- Know your healthy weight

- Check your blood pressure
- Stop smoking – it's the only health option
- Maintain a healthy mind and a healthy body

“We also welcome that this new policy recognises the diversity of Australia’s male, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males, males with a disability and gay men, and that it recognises that behaviours in early childhood have an impact in health in later life and we really need to keep emphasising this,” continued Dr Mitchell.

The National Male Health Policy is available at www.health.gov.au/malehealthpolicy

The M5 Project – www.m5project.com.au

Men’s health statement of the RACGP Curriculum for General Practice
www.racgp.org.au/scriptcontent/curriculum/pdf/menshealth.pdf

RACGP’s men’s health policy – www.racgp.org.au/policy/mens_health.pdf

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Media contacts

Melanie Fontolliet, RACGP Media & PR Manager, 03 8699 0513 or 0424 461 622
Jessica Warne, RACGP Media & PR Coordinator, 03 8699 0442

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.