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Organised PSA testing could protect Australian men

The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) welcomes the call for an organised approach to the detection of early prostate cancer made by renowned expert in cancer epidemiology, Professor Bruce Armstrong AM, at the annual conference of the Public Health Association of Australia in Brisbane on Monday.

“This is in line with the intent of our College’s recently released position paper relating to the optimal use of PSA for cancer detection,” says RCPA President A/Prof Paul McKenzie.

“Although evidence of the mortality benefit of PSA testing is only now emerging and has not been universally accepted, we recognise the reality that there has been, for several decades, a high level of testing for this common cancer among older Australian men, occurring without a framework of widely endorsed guidelines.

“There are substantial concerns that the existing unorganised use of PSA testing can potentially cause men more harm than good in some circumstances. We believe that testing protocols developed using the best available evidence, with a robust system for data collection on performance and outcomes offer the best chance of minimising this potential harm.

“Pathology plays a vital role in this area and the College welcomes the opportunity to have a round table discussion with interested medical colleges and other key stakeholders to develop evidence-based guidelines for the use of the PSA test and prostate biopsies,” says A/Professor McKenzie.

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Media enquiries:

Dr Debra Graves
CEO – RCPA
0417 218 528

or

Wayne Tregaskis
S2i Communications
02- 9231 2927