

## Media release

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### **RCPA champions worldwide cancer dataset development**

The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) is facilitating a quadripartite alliance between the College of American Pathologists (CAP), Royal College of Pathologists UK (RCPATH) and the Canadian Association of Pathology for the development of standardised and globally accepted cancer datasets for the pathology reporting of cancer.

Dr David Ellis, (Chairman of RCPA Cancer Reporting Project), says that international standardization of information on tumour type, staging, and prognostic and predictive factors is a fundamental prerequisite for the management of cancer and benchmarking both nationally and internationally.

“Pathologists generate key diagnostic information which is essential for clinicians to manage patients with cancer,” says Dr Ellis.

“The same information gathered by Australian Cancer Registries is fundamental to Federal Government efforts through the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare to monitor the incidence, nature and management of cancer in Australia.”

Cancer reporting standards, including those produced by the RCPA, ensure that detailed pathology information essential for patient management are complete, concise, reproducible and in line with the highest international standards and current knowledge.

Although there are similarities between checklists and datasets produced in each country, the lack of an international standard carries significant risk for interoperability and international benchmarking.

The International Collaboration of Cancer Reporting (ICCR) has been convened to investigate development of internationally harmonised datasets between the four organisations, chaired by the RCPA.

An initial agreement to collaborate was signed in February 2011, with all four parties agreeing to work towards the standardised pathology datasets for prostate, endometrium, melanoma and lung cancer.

During this six month trial, each cancer specific team documented the technical specifications and precise criteria to be used for reporting elements which are deemed “required” or mandatory and those which are “recommended” but not mandatory. Respective value lists or responses for each data element were also examined.

At a recent meeting held on 28 August in Helsinki, ICCR reviewed progress and concluded that the trial project was highly successful as each group was able to agree on a set of “Required” and “Recommended” elements for each cancer, including responses.

Following this success, the ICCR is now intending to expand its efforts and has extended an invitation to European organisations interested in collaboration.

**Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia**

The RCPA is the leading organisation representing pathologists in Australasia. Its mission is to train and support pathologists and to improve the use of pathology testing to achieve better healthcare.

For more information please visit:

<http://www.rcpa.edu.au/Publications/StructuredReporting.htm>

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**Media enquiries:**

Dr Debra Graves  
CEO – RCPA  
0417 218 528

or

Jade Heng  
S2i Communications  
0450 533 431