

RCPA celebrates International Pathology Day 2018



Yesterday, pathologists, scientists and laboratories around the globe gathered to celebrate the seventh International Pathology Day (IPD). Launched originally by the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA), this annual awareness day aims to highlight the fundamental role of pathology in the healthcare community and in the lives of everyone. It is now recognised in Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, the UK, Ireland, the USA, Canada, and South Africa.

In Sydney, Australia, the RCPA hosted an event at their headquarters in Surry Hill. The main theme of the event was a focus on the Government's National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (the Program). Pathologists provided insights into the Program, along with an overview of the successful #justpooit campaign which was recently launched in Tasmania.

Anton Enus, the highly respected and admired reporter for SBS World News, was also in attendance to share his personal experience with bowel cancer which was discovered after he returned a free kit he received in the post. National medical reporter for the ABC, Sophie Scott also returned for a second year to lead the event's discussions which highlighted the vital role that pathologists are playing in the diagnosis and treatment of bowel cancer and the importance of participating in the Program.

Anton Enus, SBS reporter, said,

"Today, my morning started with putting out a tweet which essentially said 'thank you to pathologists, the unsung heroes of the medical industry who saved my life' and I don't think it is overly dramatic to say that."

"In December 2016, I was diagnosed with bowel cancer out of the blue. I was fortunate because I was diagnosed early, I was part of a system that is designed to pick up those clues. I credit the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program for saving my life because that was what alerted me, and everyone else, to the fact that there was something going on. Even then I was reluctant as a middle aged man to admit that there was a problem, admit that there was a vulnerability, admit that something is out of my control and I have to trust someone else in

order to fix that problem. I had to place my trust in the pathologists that were involved and I'm so glad I took that step to follow up on the stool sample test because I really do believe that that saved my life."

Professor Anthony Gill, said,

"Australia has one of the highest rates of bowel cancer in the world. 17,000 people were diagnosed with bowel cancer this year – that's 46 Australians every single day. It is normally asymptomatic for a very long time. If bowel cancer is detected early, it's very curable with standard treatments, and it's much easier to treat than an advanced disease."

"With the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program – it's been studied at length and we know that even at the current rates of participation, which remember is only 40% of people who receive the kit, it will prevent 97,000 Australians getting colon cancer by 2040. That's better than curing cancer, it will stop people from developing it by removing these precursor polyps. It will also save 57,000 lives. It will save \$1.7billion before 2040."

Dr Bruce Latham, President of the RCPA, said:

"At International Pathology Day, the main purpose is to raise the awareness of pathology in community. But the other part of it is that we also need to raise awareness of pathology in our own profession because we as a profession are becoming more and more taken for granted by our medical colleagues. More and more of what we do is accessorised by other people so we do need to raise our awareness in our own profession as well."

The RCPA also debuted a new video featuring AFL star, Greater Western Sydney player, Sam J Reid. The [video](#) explains the importance of pathology and is aimed at a younger target age group.

For further information on the RCPA, visit www.rcpa.edu.au or see our updates on [Facebook](#) or Twitter - [@PathologyRCPA](#) or Instagram - [@the_rcpa](#). #IPD2018 #RCPA #pathology #MedicinesPathology.

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About the 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.

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