

## Media release

17 March 2015

### World leaders in addiction medicine to gather in Melbourne

International leaders in addictive medicine will meet in Melbourne from Friday to share the latest research and clinical approaches to substances including alcohol, prescription drugs, cannabis and emerging recreational drugs.

Over three days from March 20, the International Medicine in Addiction Conference 2015 (IMiA 2015) will see international and local practitioners discuss issues including the impact of alcohol on emergency departments, the AFL's illicit drug policy and the link between alcohol, drugs and domestic violence.

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians' (RACP), the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists' (RANZCP) have combined forces to run what is regarded as Australia's premier addiction medicine conference.

Dr Matthew Frei, President of the RACP Australasian Chapter of Addiction Medicine, said this year's [program](#) and speakers will ensure a thought-provoking event that covers relevant topics critical to addiction medicine and the challenges faced by the profession day-to-day.

"Addiction medicine is at the core of issues ranging from medicinal cannabis to problem gambling and prescription drug misuse in Australia. IMiA 2015 will shape the way physicians approach their work and their attitudes towards patients," Dr Frei said.

"International keynote speakers will include Dr Adam Winstock, Honorary Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Psychiatry, Kings College London who will discuss how the internet and the acceptance of pleasure has changed the world of drugs forever."

RACGP President Dr Frank R Jones said presentations on complex pain management, prescription drug misuse and the link between alcohol and drug use and domestic violence would be particularly relevant to GPs.

"GPs are often the first port of call for patients with a range of complex addiction issues and they are in the privileged position of being able to help treat a patient's addiction themselves or ensure they get access to other treatment options. Being armed with the most up-to-date information and treatment options from conferences like the IMiA can help GPs do this," Dr Jones said.

RANZCP President Dr Murray Patton said alcohol and drug abuse continue to be a huge contributor to poor mental health and the conference provides an opportunity for health experts to review new research into addiction medicine and discuss the challenges they face.

"This conference offers an opportunity to hear from leaders in the field about the latest research findings and treatment approaches to drug, alcohol and substance abuse," Dr Patton said.

Other conference highlights include:

- **Cannabis: how can a drug be both good and bad at the same time?**

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Associate Professor Nicholas Lintzeris, Director Drug & Alcohol Services at SESLHD and Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Addiction Medicine, University of Sydney

- **Benzodiazepines: What is happening on the streets and in primary care?**

Dr Hester Wilson, Sydney GP

- **Substance induced mental disorders**

Prof Dan Lubman, Professor of Addiction Services Monash University and Director Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre.

For more details about IMiA2015 and to download the program, visit the [IMiA2015 website](#). You can also follow the conference on Twitter #IMiA15.

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### Media contacts

For conference media passes, further information, or to arrange an interview with the RACP, RACGP or RANZCP please contact:

#### Christine Gounder

Communications Coordinator

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists

03 9601 4940 or 0497 979 711

[Christine.Gounder@ranzcp.org](mailto:Christine.Gounder@ranzcp.org)

#### Debbie Guest

Communications and Media Advisor

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

03 8699 0484 or 0439 585 798

[debbie.guest@racgp.org.au](mailto:debbie.guest@racgp.org.au)

#### Ryan Lipman

Media and External Affairs Officer

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians

02 9256 9650

[ryan.lipman@racp.edu.au](mailto:ryan.lipman@racp.edu.au)