



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians

RACP: vaccination prevents infectious diseases and saves lives

Media Release

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The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) has challenged the anti-vaccination arguments of University of Wollongong (UOW) PhD student Dr Judy Wilyman.

The RACP, which represents the interests of the 23,000 physicians across Australasia, has been a long-term advocate of vaccination as a public health intervention, arguing that it is the most effective way to prevent infectious diseases and save lives.

RACP President Laureate Professor Nick Talley said while RACP was supportive of objective scientific discussion, the evidence has been reviewed and he is convinced of the benefits of vaccination.

“The College is clear in its position of encouraging parents and healthcare professionals to be vigilant in ensuring children are immunised.

“Immunisation builds a child or infant’s barrier of protection for their age. This increases their ability to fight potentially deadly viruses and infections should they come into contact with them,” explained Professor Talley.

“We know that a child who has not been immunised is at a much higher risk of disease. And it is clear that maintaining vaccination programs at a level that ensures herd immunity, in order to protect our societies’ health, is of the utmost importance.

“The College has a strong interest in vaccinations because it is a preventative measure rather than a treatment. And although we acknowledge that they are not always 100 per cent effective, if there are issues they are promptly investigated.”

Professor Talley said in recent years improved vaccination programs have led to polio being eliminated from the Western Pacific region since 2000 and measles approaching elimination.

“Despite these positive outcomes, there is some misinformation in the community,” added Professor Talley.

Professor Talley questioned suggestions of bias from Dr Wilyman following claims adverse events are not investigated because it isn’t in the financial interests of the medical industry.

“The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is the regulatory organisation responsible for monitoring and investigating adverse events. The TGA is responsive, investigating any significant concerns around vaccination safety.”

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About The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP): The RACP trains, educates and advocates on behalf of more than 15,000 physicians and 7,500 trainee physicians across Australia and New Zealand.

The College represents a broad range of medical specialties including general medicine, paediatrics and child health, cardiology, respiratory medicine, neurology, oncology, public health medicine, occupational and environmental medicine, palliative medicine, sexual health medicine, rehabilitation medicine, geriatric medicine and addiction medicine. Beyond the drive for medical excellence, the RACP is committed to developing health and social policies which bring vital improvements to the wellbeing of patients.

The College offers 60 training pathways. These lead to the award of one of seven qualifications that align with 45 specialist titles recognised by the Medical Board of Australia or allow for registration in nine vocational scopes with the Medical Council of New Zealand.