



MEDIA RELEASE
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**Most Australians know someone affected by melanoma
Join our march for a cure and show them ‘*they’re not alone*’**

Australia’s national cancer needs a cure and not-for-profit organisation Melanoma Institute Australia (MIA) is ready to find it. This year 14,000 Australians will be told they have melanoma, one of the highest rates in the world.

Now in its seventh year, MIA and new Principal Partner Brightside Cover are inviting local communities across the country to participate in their local Melanoma March – an annual event that raises vital awareness and life-saving funds for melanoma research.

“While recent melanoma research breakthroughs have tripled life expectancy for some advanced melanoma patients, melanoma continues to be the most common cancer affecting 15 to 39 year olds and kills more young Australians aged 20-39 than any other cancer,” said Melanoma Institute Australia CEO, Carole Renouf. “This is why we are marching for a cure. But we can’t do it alone.

“We are delighted to welcome Brightside Cover as our new Principal Partner for Melanoma March. Their support will enable us to reach more people and raise awareness not only about the need to fundraise for vital research, but for Australians to protect themselves from the damaging effects of the sun,” she added.

Passionate about raising awareness about melanoma after his own diagnosis, fitness guru and Melanoma March ambassador Shannan Ponton is urging all Australians to support research to beat melanoma.

Shannan’s story is the first to be featured in a series of emotive videos launched today, showing the impact of melanoma on everyday Australians. Stories to follow will include a young family devastated by melanoma; and a pregnant woman faced with the impossible choice of delivering her baby early or delaying melanoma treatment.

“The thing with melanoma is that you may not know you have it until it’s too late,” says Shannan. “If Australians take just one message from my story, I hope it is this – protect your family from the sun and be aware of any changes to your skin. It’s not just about being informed - it’s about taking action and the Melanoma March events are a way we can all pro-actively ensure a better future for our children.”

Funds raised from Melanoma March 2018 will support the *Big Data for Melanoma* Project that is creating a critical register to record the treatment and outcomes of patients with melanoma, wherever they are in Australia, to drive best practice and standard of care and is receiving the

ensure everyone has the same best possible treatment.





“The *Big Data for Melanoma* Project will connect medical practitioners across the country, enabling them to share invaluable information and offering new insights into treatment responses,” Ms Renouf said. “That will ultimately improve care and outcomes for patients.”

In addition to the popular 21 Melanoma March events across the country, the Melbourne March will host a run component and Brisbane will be cooled down with a twilight March. Sydney’s flagship March will return to Manly with participants also having the option of a stand-up paddle event lead by Shannan Ponton.

Also available this year are colourful slap bands – one for patients who *inspire* others, one for family and friends to *remember* a loved one, and one for those showing *support* for those tackling melanoma.

“It’s important we remember that those affected by melanoma are someone’s mother or father, daughter or son, sibling or friend,” Ms Renouf said. “The marches are one way to let them know they are not alone, and that we’re supporting them by working hard to achieve a future free of melanoma.”

Melanoma Institute Australia is asking all Aussies to join the March for a cure ‘*because we can’t do it alone*’. Melanoma March events will be held nationally, mainly throughout the month of March, in:

- VIC: Melbourne, Bendigo
- ACT: Canberra
- QLD: Brisbane, Townsville, Rockhampton, Coolangatta
- SA: Adelaide, Mount Gambier
- WA: Broome, Bunbury, Kalgoorlie, Perth, Mandurah
- NSW: Bathurst, Manly, Picton, Penrith, Port Macquarie, Newcastle, Wollongong

To register for your local March or to donate, go to www.melanomamarch.org.au

Melanoma March 2018 is an initiative of Melanoma Institute Australia. In South Australia, we work alongside Australian Melanoma Research Foundation; in Western Australia, we work with melanomaWA; and in Victoria, we work with the Skin & Cancer Foundation Inc.

Melanoma March 2018 Principal Partner is [Brightside Cover](#).

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