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Bristol Myers Squibb Australia supports efforts to defeat melanoma and skin cancer

- ***BMSA partners with Melanoma and Skin Cancer Advocacy Network (MSCAN) to conduct skin cancer checks in Parliament House***
- ***Patients, Industry, Medical Community and Federal MPs and Senators attend launch of Parliamentary Friends of Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness***

Canberra, Australia - Wednesday 15 February: Today, Bristol-Myers Squibb Australia (BMS) together with the Melanoma and Skin Cancer Advocacy Network (MSCAN) and researchers from the Australian Centre of Excellence in Melanoma Imaging & Diagnosis (ACEMID) will conduct complimentary screening for skin cancer for members and senators in Parliament House. The event is part of a campaign to raise awareness about the importance of early detection and treatment of melanoma and other skin cancers in Australia. The screening will be conducted by two of Australia's leading dermatologists, Professor H. Peter Soyer, Chair in Dermatology, Frazer Institute, The University of Queensland and Associate Professor Erin McMeniman, Chair, Queensland Faculty of Dermatology.

Following the skin checks will be the launch of the **Parliamentary Friends of Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness** at 12pm. Representatives from the melanoma community, the pharmaceutical industry, researchers and clinicians, senior public servants, and others will join Members of Parliament and Senators to formally launch the **parliamentary friendship group**.

The Group will provide a forum for Members and Senators to meet with organisations which are dedicated to preventing and curing melanoma through research, treatment and education programs, and deliver support to melanoma and skin cancer patients and their families. The chairs for this group are the Hon. Jason Clare MP and the Hon. Darren Chester MP.

With one of the highest per capita rates of melanoma and skin cancer incidence in the world, this is undoubtedly Australia's national cancer. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, in 2022 almost 18,000 Australians will be diagnosed with melanoma and more than 1,200 will die as a result of the disease.

Summer, when Australians spend more time enjoying our beaches, parks and the outdoor environment, is also a great reminder of the importance of a regular melanoma and skin cancer check. Early detection is the best way to ensure that anything of concern is identified and treated as early as possible.

Tamara Dawson, CEO of MSCAN said "Early detection is a critical part of how we can best manage the threat of skin cancers and melanoma. We know that those diagnosed early have an excellent prognosis, with both surgical and systemic treatment options, so we need to make sure that people appreciate the importance of knowing their skin, looking for changes and getting skin checks.

The Parliamentary Friends of Melanoma and Skin Cancer will be an incredible platform for awareness and MSCAN looks forward to working with the friendship group to reduce the terrible burden of skin cancer in this country," said Ms Dawson.

“In recent years we have seen a tremendous shift in the way melanoma patients are treated, with thousands of patients accessing novel treatments in earlier clinical settings. As the treatment landscape continues to improve for melanoma and skin cancer patients it is imperative that we ensure timely PBS listings and access to innovative new medicines for all Australians. We are proud of the role BMS plays in driving change for patients” said Leah Goodman, Managing Director, Bristol Myers Squibb Australia.

“Australian melanoma patients currently have access to immuno-oncology treatments reimbursed in monotherapy, combination and adjuvant therapy for the treatment of melanoma. BMS is proud of our part in changing the way melanoma is treated and the subsequent increase in the chance of longer term survival of this deadly disease.” said Ms Goodman.

If you would like any further information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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