

SEPTEMBER 2025

PROGRESS UPDATE



Roadmap for a National Targeted Skin Cancer Screening Program

Following the Australian Government's announcement of funding for a Roadmap for a National Targeted Skin Cancer Screening Program in October 2024, Melanoma Institute Australia (MIA) was awarded a grant in January 2025 to lead its development.

BACKGROUND

The Government's funding reflects that there is a huge unmet need to address the burden of melanoma and that 69% of all Australians will develop some form of skin cancer in their lifetime.

The Roadmap will review the evidence for and against a national screening program and will make recommendations on the feasibility and possible design of a program, taking into consideration issues of equity, acceptability, and cost-effectiveness. This will be a challenging task over the next three years but the energy and commitment from well over 100 people already involved is palpable.

GETTING STARTED

The Roadmap is a huge collaborative effort. The first step was to assemble a diverse network of research, clinical, consumer and policy experts to form the governance committees and working groups (Workstreams) for the program. The Roadmap Launch was held at Melanoma Institute Australia on the 14 March 2025 to formally commence the work. The final target is a Roadmap Report to be delivered to the Australian Government in September 2028.

We have established a page on the MIA website where you can read more about the Program, the people involved and view updates including the Summary Report from the Launch Meeting and a video of some of the presentations and discussions.

Funding and Timeline



WORKSTREAMS

Workstreams have met monthly since March 2025, focusing on targeted questions aligning with the Australian Population Based Screening Framework. There are 5 workstreams as follows:

1. Screening population & risk assessment	2. Screening intervention & management pathways	3. Data collection, linkage & register, engagement with AIHW	4. Modelling & health economics	5. Program Roadmap/Blueprint
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitations & entry points for risk assessment • Target population for invitations • Risk assessment: which outcomes, risk tool(s), risk factors, validation, prospective assessment & delivery • Role of genomic testing • Behavioural counselling: primary prevention & early detection • Integration with public awareness campaigns • Risk communication • Workforce considerations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model of care and delivery of screening intervention, clinical assessment and follow-up for different levels of risk • Role of diagnostic technologies e.g. dermoscopy, total body photography • Role of artificial intelligence and teledermatology • Ensuring accurate diagnosis; role of clinical and pathology review • Minimising overdiagnosis • Role of consumer-directed technologies • Skin self-examination • Quality standards including skin checks • Workforce considerations, training, accreditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the Australian Cancer Database through improved skin cancer data collection and data linkage • Program data collection, data linkage and ongoing evaluation • National Cancer Screening Register requirements • Key performance indicators for quality of care and program performance • Data access for ongoing research and evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs and cost-effectiveness of targeted skin cancer screening in Australia based on a range of scenarios (e.g. different risk groups and models of care) • Assessment of the potential benefits and harms • Funding mechanisms (e.g. MBS, other) • Screening program governance • Role of jurisdictions • Health system flow-on impacts • System infrastructure readiness for use of technologies (e.g. IT integration, connectivity, data sharing, interoperability) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captures program design elements, informed by the other workstreams. • Elements of design are specified in the grant documentation; examples include risk assessment, screening intervention, workforce, education and training, national program governance, National Cancer Screening Register, communications, quality assurance, etc. • This blueprint for a national targeted skin cancer screening program represents the key output from the roadmap program

Equity: All workstreams will consider how to address inequities for people in priority populations (Australian Cancer Plan): regional, rural and remote areas; lower socioeconomic groups; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; culturally and linguistically diverse, living with a disability, LGBTIQ+; living with a mental illness; older Australians, children, adolescents and young adults and those with poorer skin cancer outcomes.



The Launch of the Roadmap for a National Targeted Skin Cancer Screening Program at Melanoma Institute Australia.

PROGRESS

The technical experts in the Operations Team are developing evidence summaries to support the work of the Workstreams, and a number of data collection and data linkage studies have been approved to conduct targeted research to address key questions for the Roadmap. This includes a 25-year follow-up of the original and only randomised controlled trial of melanoma screening, the Pilot Melanoma Screening Trial in Queensland,¹ using data-linkage to track the long-term survival and health service use outcomes of participants.

We have commenced engagement with a large network of interested parties to ensure the development of the Roadmap is informed by those who would be involved in or impacted by a melanoma screening program. Ninety-three (93) stakeholder organisations have been identified to date, including health professional colleges and associations, research networks, community organisations, consumer-led skin check and awareness programs, industry, policy experts, Government and organisations that will help ensure that priority populations defined in the Australian Cancer Plan are fully represented. So far, half have been individually contacted to discuss their interest and engagement with the program. This initial step will continue during August to October 2025, to reach those who have not been contacted yet.

1: Aitken JF, Elwood JM, Lowe JB, Firman DW, Balanda KP, Ring IT. A randomised trial of population screening for melanoma. J Med Screen. 2002;9(1):33-7. doi: 10.1136/jms.9.1.33.

SCHEDULED MEETINGS/ EVENTS:



An annual Roadmap meeting that brings everyone together is planned for the **27 March 2026 in Sydney**. We will be in touch with a save-the-date very soon.

Committee and Workstream Chairs and Deputy Chairs

In addition to the Workstreams, there are three Committees and an Operations Team.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(Left) Prof Anne Cust (Chair), Melanoma Institute Australia; The Daffodil Centre (University of Sydney and Cancer Council NSW) (Right) Prof Monika Janda (Deputy Chair), University of Queensland



EXPERT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

(Left) Prof David Whiteman (Chair), QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute (Right) Prof Vivienne Milch (Deputy Chair), Cancer Australia



COMMUNITY AND CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

(Left) Craig Lawn (Chair) (Middle) Alison Button-Sloan (Deputy Chair) (Right) Rod Flude (Deputy Chair)



WORKSTREAM 1

(Left) A/Prof Kylie Vuong (Chair), University of Melbourne (Right) Prof Monika Janda (Deputy Chair), University of Queensland



WORKSTREAM 2

(Left) A/Prof Tony Caccetta (Chair), University of Western Australia (Right) Prof Victoria Mar (Deputy Chair), Monash University



WORKSTREAM 3

(Left) Prof Rachael Morton (Chair), The University of Sydney (Right) Kirsten Morgan (Deputy Chair), Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (until Aug 2025)



WORKSTREAM 4

(Left) Prof Louisa Collins (Chair), Cancer Council Queensland (Right) Prof Karen Canfell (Deputy Chair), The University of Sydney

KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

An important initial question discussed by the Expert Advisory Committee, Community and Consumer Advisory Committee and Workstreams is whether the primary focus of the screening program will be to detect melanoma or all skin cancers.

The teams are currently working through the data with reference to the Population Based Screening Framework and the policy and health technology assessment implications to ensure a sound rationale for this key decision.

If you would like to read more about the Program, we have established a page on the MIA website:

melanoma.org.au/research/roadmap-targeted-skin-cancer-screening-program/

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