



Hunter Melanoma Foundation
checkmate.org.au

Melanoma kills. Skin Checks Save Lives.

The Hunter Melanoma Foundation (HMF) launches its “Check Mate” early detection campaign 11.30am Monday 20 August at the Duke of Wellington Hotel New Lambton.

Too many men are dying from melanoma in the Hunter. **In fact over 50% of all melanoma deaths are men over 50** - a group comprising just 12% of the population! When you consider melanoma is one of the most curable of all cancers when detected early - this is a disturbing statistic. When melanoma is picked up early there is a 97%* cure rate, so it makes sense that if men get a simple skin check and catch melanoma before the damage is done, there is a good chance of reducing this appalling death rate.

In a nutshell, the message from the Check Mate campaign is **“a ten minute skin check could save your life”**.

Nine years ago Paul Corbett lost his battle with melanoma at age 56.

In 2002, following surgery to remove brain tumours, Paul courageously helped the HMF raise awareness about melanoma prevention and encouraged men to get get skin checks. It would seem the message needs to be driven home again. This time Paul's widow, Veronica - together with Lisa and Carole who were also widowed by melanoma - bravely talk about how the loss of their life partner affected them and their families.

The campaign also features 52 year old Lawrie, who luckily caught his melanoma early and survived. Lawrie's story of early detection is aimed at men in their forties and fifties.

The comprehensive “Check Mate” campaign, created by local advertising agency Cactus, comprises of TV, radio, press, outdoor, digital and ambient. Posters and coasters will be distributed around the pubs and clubs targeting men. Posters and magnets will also be distributed to all GPs to display in the waiting rooms encouraging regular skin checks. Apart from targeting the men, the campaign deliberately targets women as we need the wives and partners to “encourage” their men to get a simple skin check. Men, in particular baby boomers, are notoriously bad at dealing with their own health issues.

Apart from the generous support from local media the campaign- as is all of the HMFs work - is funded purely by donations from the local community and corporate donors. Funding for the “Check Mate” campaign came from the Master Builders Association and Newcastle Rotary Club who together raised over \$33,000 at a ball and another \$16,000 was raised by Colleen Praniess and her team at Belmont 16s by hosting a Christmas in July function. Colleen herself has suffered from melanoma.

For more information contact:

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For interview with Veronica, Lisa, Carole or Lawrie please contact Jenny Noblet.

*5 year survival rate for melanomas < 1mm thick