

WHO Intersun Advisory meeting

New Zealand country report 2017

1 Policies and legislation on UV exposures

An amendment to the Health Act 1956 to ban the commercial provision of sunbed services to under-18s entered into force at the start of 2017. Commercial operators have been visited by Public Health staff to ensure that they are aware of the legislation. Regulations to control other aspects of commercial sunbed operations are now being prepared.

A new five year *New Zealand Skin Cancer Primary Prevention and Early Detection Strategy 2017 to 2022* was released in March 2017¹. The Strategy is sector led, and was released by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) and the Melanoma Network (MelNet), in partnership with the skin cancer control sector including the Cancer Society of New Zealand and Melanoma New Zealand. The Strategy helps inform programmes and activities to reduce the incidence and impact of skin cancer in New Zealand and is directed at all professionals working in skin cancer control. It includes an up-to-date analysis of both the epidemiology of skin cancer in New Zealand, including risk factors, as well as evidence-based interventions to reduce exposure to ultraviolet radiation that causes harm.

2 Public information activities

2.1 Health Promotion Agency (HPA)

The HPA, a crown entity which leads and supports national health promotion initiatives and uses the “SunSmart” brand for UV protection, has updated its sun protection web pages². The HPA promotes the Sun Protection Alert³ which gives the recommended times of day when SunSmart steps are recommended, and suggests SunSmart tips and actions.

The HPA continues to support doctors, pharmacists and nurses to be SunSmart champions and encourage SunSmart and early detection behaviours to the public. Nurses were provided with a free SunSmart training module⁴ in February 2017.

A free melanoma risk predictor tool was launched, in partnership with the Best Practice Advocacy Centre New Zealand (BPAC) and Dr Mary Jane Sneyd from University of Otago. The tool is available to all doctors and skin cancer nurses in New Zealand through BPAC’s Patient Management System. It predicts the likely risk of getting melanoma within the next five years for European New Zealanders aged 20 years and over.

Over the 2016/2017 summer, HPA partnered with Melanoma New Zealand to encourage older men to self-check their skin, using the ‘Spot it, Stop it, Live on’ strapline. The campaign included a radio advertisement *Notice the Change*⁵, which was awarded the best radio ad of the week worldwide and has also been picked up and shared internationally by global advertising showcase sites.

¹ Available at: <http://www.melnet.org.nz/resources>

² <http://sunsmart.org.nz/>

³ <http://www.sunsmart.org.nz/sun-protection-alert>

⁴ <http://www.sunsmart.org.nz/learn-more/sunsmart-training-module-nurses>

⁵ www.coloribus.com/adsarchive/radio/health-promotion-agency-notice-the-change-22159460/

2.2 NZ Smartphone apps for iPhone and Android

The Uv2Day app covering UV in New Zealand, Antarctica, Australia and the South Pacific now has an option to default to a UV forecast including cloud effects, instead of just a clear sky forecast. There have been 2099 downloads.

The Global UV app (recommended for use when travelling outside the south pacific region) has been slimmed down to 20 Mbytes, and has had 616 downloads.

Uvlens also offers UV information around the world, and UV monitoring kits for schools.

2.3 Cancer Society of New Zealand (CSNZ)

The CSNZ is the leading NGO in New Zealand for the prevention of skin cancer and advocates for strong policy and regulation that will reduce New Zealand's high rate of skin cancer. It continues to fund, support and promote the SunSmart Schools programme, and is developing an Early Childhood (EC) Sector professional development (PD) resource. This an on-line tool designed to upskill EC educators about UV radiation and sun protection behaviours. EC teachers who complete the assessment are able to use it toward their three yearly PD portfolio accreditation.

3 Research activities

3.1 Public health units

Public Health Units (PHUs) have made a further check of solarium operations against recommended best practice. They found a small improvement since the previous checks, and compliance in Auckland (which has a bylaw regulating commercial sunbed operators) was again much better than in the rest of the country. Copies of survey reports are available⁶.

3.2 University of Otago Cancer Society Social & Behavioural Research Unit

Social & Behavioural Research Unit (SBRU) staff helped develop the New Zealand Skin Cancer Primary Prevention and Early Detection Strategy 2017 to 2022. The following research projects were progressed:

3.2.1 Skin cancer primary prevention in New Zealand public secondary schools

Current sun protection policies and practices of New Zealand secondary schools (about which there is currently little information) were surveyed and documented, and sun protective policies and practices and opportunities for improvement identified. Results were published in Preventive Medicine Reports.

3.2.2 Quantifying the association between sun exposure and vitamin D status

Two papers were published in collaboration with other researchers: *Sun exposure and 25-hydroxyvitamin D3 levels in a community sample: Quantifying the association with electronic dosimeters* in the Journal of Exposure Science and Environment, and *Factors associated with clothing coverage in non-summer months among a New Zealand community sample* in Photochemical and Photobiological Sciences.

3.2.3 Sunburn in a New Zealand urban population, 1994–2006

A paper *Unintended sunburn: A potential target for sun protection messages* was published in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health. Unintended sunburn remains a key target for promoting protection by clothing and shade.

⁶ <http://www.emfservices.co.nz/resources/uv-and-sunbeds>

3.2.4 Systematic review of interventions for the primary prevention of skin cancer

SBRU staff joined an international team coordinated through the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Atlanta). Draft updates of reviews for five settings are posted on the Community Guide website and a review of two intervention types (mass media campaigns, alone, and multicomponent communitywide interventions) was published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine. To help inform the NZ Skin Cancer Steering Committee, SBRU staff prepared a report to update these systematic reviews.

3.2.5 Adolescent sports events: an observational study

The physical environment and the sun protective behaviour of adolescents (and officials) engaged in school athletics sports days were observed and recorded. A paper published in the Australian & New Zealand Journal of Public Health concluded that the sun protection behaviours left much to be desired.

3.2.6 Reducing harm from commercial sunbeds

The SBRU conducted an audit of indoor tanning services in New Zealand (including the provision and cost of sunbeds and spray tanning services) and monitored online auction sales of second hand sunbeds. This formed the basis for a submission on proposed sunbed regulations, and a paper published in the New Zealand Medical Journal. The provision of sunbed services is the core business of only 4% of providers, so the economic impact of a sunbed ban would be relatively minor. Sunbeds were offered for sale online with no restrictions on their purchase and subsequent private use. Monitoring the sale of second hand sunbeds continues.

3.2.7 Appearance-based intervention in secondary schools

A proposed intervention to test the reliability and evaluate the intervention effectiveness of a measure of sun protective behaviour among NZ secondary school students was evaluated in two separate classes in a co-educational secondary school.

3.2.8 Evaluation of sun protection in primary schools

Wearable cameras were used to obtain data on the sun protective behaviours of primary school children and the shade available in Wellington primary schools. A number of papers are in preparation.

3.3 National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA)

NIWA is planning a further workshop “UV Radiation: Effects on Human Health and the Environment”, to be held in Wellington New Zealand between 4-6 April 2018.

The workshop will be organised along lines similar to those in the previous highly successful workshops <https://www.niwa.co.nz/our-services/online-services/uv-and-ozone/workshops>. Foci of the 2018 workshop will include:

- Ozone, Climate, and UV Radiation
- UVI & its effective communication
- The role of apps/digital technology
- Balancing the need for vitamin D against the need for avoiding skin damage from UV radiation

Registrations are now open at <https://www.niwa.co.nz/node/111727>.

3.4 HPA

The HPA carries out a triennial Sun Exposure Survey and a biennial Health and Lifestyles Survey (which includes a sun safety section).

The Sun Exposure Survey collects information on attitudes and behaviours towards sun exposure, to facilitate comparison with historical survey data, and to inform future decision making in the sun safety and skin cancer prevention sector. The last survey was run in 2016.

The Health and Lifestyles Survey is a biennial monitor of the health behaviour and attitudes of New Zealand adults aged 15 years and over, and parents and caregivers of 5 to 16-year-olds, first carried out in 2008. The last survey was run in 2016.

Recent reports and results can be found on the HPA website⁷.

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⁷ <http://www.hpa.org.nz/research-library/research-publications>