



THE AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF DERMATOLOGISTS

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Dermatology Australasia and Australasian College of Dermatologists

Course outline:

Skin Disease in Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander Peoples
2026



Dermatology
AUSTRALASIA

1. Course information

1.1 Course aims

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are afflicted by the same skin diseases and systemic diseases which manifest in the skin as the wider Australian population. However some diseases are more common amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, for example some infectious diseases. Other conditions occur more rarely amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, for example, melanoma and porphyria cutanea tarda.

This module covers the processes involved in providing safe and competent Dermatology services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It focuses on the skills, knowledge and behaviours required when taking a history, examining, diagnosing and managing skin diseases and systemic diseases which may manifest in the skin amongst these patient groups.

Skin diseases such as streptococcal disease and systemic diseases that may manifest in the skin such as lupus erythematosus, renal failure, diabetes and vascular diseases, can reduce the life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. It is therefore important to know how these diseases impact upon indigenous people.

Knowledge of the epidemiology in Australia of important infectious diseases including scabies, streptococcal skin disease, community acquired MRSA, leprosy, tinea, strongyloidiasis and the sexually transmitted diseases syphilis and Donovanosis, is also required.

More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in urban areas than remote communities and the prevalence of skin diseases will vary depending on a person's social circumstances. Knowledge of the fundamentals of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, views concerning health, ethics and racism, cultural biases and social disadvantage are essential. Social factors such as housing, education, employment and mobility will alter the prevalence of diseases and their management. In some communities language and communication are barriers to adequate medical care.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may attribute ill health to reasons that are unimaginable to us as western health professionals and unless this is addressed, compliance with treatment will be undermined. A thorough history will often reveal a history of self treatments with bush medicines and other interesting facts and eliciting such a history shows an interest and consideration by the health professional which may contribute to future compliance with more conventional medical strategies.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

After completing this module, you should be able to:

1. Describe the common skin diseases that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in urban, regional and remote Australia
2. Distinguish between different manifestations of common skin diseases in heavily pigmented skin
3. Determine the possible different perceptions of causes of skin diseases by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
4. Describe how to communicate with patients in a culturally sensitive manner
5. Generate a treatment regimen compatible with cultural attitudes

1.3 Learning and teaching activities

The course is organised into five components.

- **Pre-learning activities:** are completed prior to starting the course and include a self-rating of your current skills and knowledge about Skin Disease in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
- **Self-paced online modules:** There are ten self-paced online modules. At the end of each module participants will need to complete a diagnostic quiz.
 - Lupus Erythematosus
 - Insulin Resistance Diabetes and Acanthosis Nigricans
 - Streptococcal Pyoderma, Rheumatic Fever and Glomerulonephritis
 - Scabies
 - Community-Acquired (Associated) Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus
 - Leprosy
 - Tinea
 - Pityriasis Versicolor
 - Melioidosis
 - Cross Cultural Awareness
- **Case Discussion Forum:** This is a forum where students list differential diagnosis, treatment and management options on various case studies. Lecturers and other students can provide feedback for discussion. This is an interactive course component.
- **Webinars:** 1 live webinar is held as part of this course in Trimester 3. Attendance or watching the recording are mandatory. Attendance is preferred, as it is an opportunity to interact with your lecturer and colleagues.
- **Post-course Self Reflection:** completed after starting the course and includes a self-rating of your acquired skills and knowledge about Skin Disease in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Clinical scenarios are the main teaching and assessment tool across all learning modes of the course. They illustrate the essential content in the online modules. They are used to assess the application of knowledge and skills in the end-of-topic tests and final examination.

2. Course Structure and Outline

You can enroll in this course at any time to access the course material. This course is delivered over a 16 - week period and is self-paced.

The course consists of a total of approximately 22 hours of student effort. Here is a general overview of how long items may take:

- 2 hours orientation/planning/pre- and post-reflection exercises
- 15 hours online learning
- 1 hour live webinar
- 2 hours Case Discussion Forum
- 2 hours Additional Reading

CPD Hours

	Total Hours	Educational Activities	Performance Review Activities	Outcome Measurement Activities
RACGP CPD Hours	22	17	5	0
ACRRM PDP Hours	22	17	5	0

1. Lupus Erythematosus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • Clinical Features • Differential Diagnoses • Management Options • Suggested Support Readings • Diagnostic Quiz
2. Insulin Resistance Diabetes and Acanthosis Nigricans	
3. Streptococcal Pyoderma, Rheumatic Fever and Glomerulonephritis	
4. Scabies	
5. Community-Acquired (Associated) Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus	
6. Leprosy	
7. Tinea	
8. Pityriasis Versicolor	
9. Melioidosis	
10. Cross Cultural Awareness	

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment tasks

Tasks	Task Description	Time	Weighting
Quizzes & Practice Scenarios	Complete the 10 topics and associated activities such as short diagnostic quizzes and practice scenarios.	At the end of the relevant topics	Need 100% to pass and proceed
Webinar	Attend the live or view the recorded webinar		Compulsory to complete
Case Discussion Forum	Reply to at all the available cases	Throughout enrolment	Compulsory

3.2 Academic integrity, referencing and plagiarism

Be sure to provide a list of references whenever you draw on someone else's words, ideas or research to inform your own work. Not referencing other people's work can constitute plagiarism.

Please read the '[ACD Academic Misconduct policy.](#)' This policy is available on the ACD Website.

4. Readings and resources

Reading and Resources for examinable material will be provided within the course content. Some extended readings and resources need to be independently sourced.

5. Administrative matters

Please see our Terms and Conditions [here](#).

For further information or questions about the course, please contact enquiries@dermatologyaustralasia.com.au.

The Australasian College of Dermatologists complies with the requirements of the Federal Privacy Act and the National Privacy Principles. A full copy of the College's privacy policy is available [here](#).

Acknowledgements

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The course development process has been managed by a GP Skin Cancer Task Force with the following college members:

- Dr Gayle Fisher
- Dr Benjamin Carew
- Dr Daniel Hewitt
- Dr Simon Lee
- Dr Victoria Mar
- Dr Jim Muir
- Dr Adam Sheridan
- Associate Professor Peter Soyer
- Dr Amil Jockoo

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