



Top pain medicine body calls for new national pain device register

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Australia's leading pain medicine body has called on the federal Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, to urgently establish a national pain device implant registry following revelations that thousands of Australian lives are at risk from potentially dangerous medical devices. The Faculty of Pain Medicine (FPM) of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) has spent the last five years advocating to the federal government for a national pain device implant registry which would be managed independently by Monash University. The faculty met with the minister's office about the registry as recently as September.

The faculty is seeking \$1.58 million over four years from the government to establish the registry and now a global investigation into the safety of medical devices by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and the ABC has highlighted the need for tougher action to protect Australian patients.

FPM Dean Dr Meredith Craigie said the case for a national pain device implant register was overwhelming.

"This is so important for patient safety and for the ongoing monitoring of these devices. The potential for harm in the field of implantable pain devices is very real. There is currently no independent post market monitoring of harm or effect.

"While innovation is a big benefit, independent safety monitoring and assessment is critical."

Dr Craigie said the current system whereby the Therapeutic Goods Administration safeguards Australians from harm associated with medical devices was a passive process of compulsory notifications by industry.

"This system has repeatedly been demonstrated to be inadequate and we hope the federal government will now move quickly to implement a pain implant device register. The faculty and Monash University are ready to act, all we need now is the funding and we can make this happen."

Monash already runs several device implant registries including for cardiac devices and breast implants.