



## Specialists call for better recognition of cancer pain

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With one in two Australians expected to be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85, Australia's leading specialist pain medicine physicians are meeting in Byron Bay this weekend to examine how cancer pain is treated and managed.

According to the Faculty of Pain Medicine (FPM) of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists, the management of cancer pain needs to be discussed openly in the community.

The faculty has organised a three day "Uniting cancer pain management" meeting starting today with specialists in rehabilitation, palliative care and children's cancer.

Faculty Dean Dr Meredith Craigie said the type of pain experienced by cancer patients depends on the type and stage of the cancer and the treatment.

"While Australia has better cancer survival rates than other similar high income countries, it is estimated that as many as 50 per cent of adults and children with cancer pain are not getting the treatment they need so this meeting is very timely," she explained.

"Cancer pain may be caused by a tumour pressing on nerves or bones but the treatments used such as chemotherapy, radiotherapy or surgery can also be painful. Our role as specialist pain medicine physicians is to help patients manage their pain and ensure they are getting the best treatment they need."

Topics to be discussed at the meeting from October 18-20 include the impact of exercise and rehabilitation on cancer patients, the use of medicinal cannabis for chronic cancer pain and how cancer survivors deal with the psychological impact of their pain.