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MEDIA RELEASE

MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS KEY TO BEST OUTCOMES FOR PATIENTS WITH HEPATOCELLULAR CARCINOMA

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A NEW consensus statement produced by the Gastroenterological Society of Australia (GESA) Liver Faculty on the management of hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) will ultimately lead to better outcomes for Australian patients, according to the authors, published today in the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

HCC is a leading cause of cancer deaths both globally and in Australia. Surveillance for HCC in at-risk populations allows diagnosis at an early stage, when potentially curable. However, most Australians diagnosed with HCC die of the cancer or of liver disease.

The consensus statement has been written by specialists in hepatology, radiology, surgery, oncology, palliative care, and primary care, including medical practitioners and nurses. It addresses four main areas relevant to HCC management:

- epidemiology and incidence;
- diagnosis;
- treatment; and,
- patient management.

The authors, led by Associate Professor John Lubel, consultant gastroenterologist at Alfred Health and Monash University, and Professor Nick Shackel, consultant gastroenterologist at the University of Sydney, concluded that surveillance of at-risk groups and multidisciplinary care were key to better patient outcomes.

“The management of HCC requires a team of experts delivering multiple therapeutic modalities while balancing the issues of pre-existent liver disease and risk of hepatic decompensation.

“Overall, mortality remains high despite all the recent advances in locoregional and systemic therapies.

“A priority for Australia, is to recognise patients at risk of HCC and to institute surveillance strategies at a time when the HCC is curable.”

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