

THE SPINE SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

An Affiliate of the Australian Orthopaedic Association

COMMITTEE ON SCREENING PROCEDURES

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Dear Principal

Concerning the National Self-Detection Program for Scoliosis (NSDP) The online discussion forum at Scoliosis Australia (www.scoliosis-australia.org)

The purpose of this letter is to remind school Principals that July/August are the months when it is recommended that all schools with girls in Years 7 and 9 participate in the NSDP by downloading the Self-Detection Brochure for Scoliosis then copying and distributing the brochure to their pupils. The brochure can be accessed directly via a link on the Scoliosis Australia home page at www.scoliosis-australia.org. We thank you if you have taken part in the exercise in the past and, if not, we ask that your school participate in this important program.

Scoliosis (spinal curvature) is an important health problem for adolescent girls and 25 per thousand are at risk of developing a significant curve. Three girls per thousand require active treatment (spinal brace or surgery). Because in the early stages the condition is most often asymptomatic, screening in the age range 11-13 years is a sound preventative health measure. When school screening for scoliosis was abandoned we introduced the Self-Detection Program as a practical alternative. Our policy on the matter is fully explained on the website.

The website contains comprehensive credible information about scoliosis. Through the forum, girls and their parents can obtain general advice from certified specialists who manage patients with spinal curvature. With over 3,000 posts to date, our forum is a useful resource in providing searchable information posted by its members regarding the different aspects of scoliosis. It offers a strong support base for adolescent patients with scoliosis and their parents. Healthcare professionals and other interested parties can discuss the NSDP in the forum.

Enquiries concerning the NSDP in each state and territory should be directed to the state and territory representatives as detailed on our letterhead and whose contact details are listed on the website.

Thank you for your co-operation. We welcome comments from you and your staff.

Yours sincerely

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