



MEDIA RELEASE

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ASUM Calls for Regulation of Sonographers and Reassurance Scanning Practices in Australia

Sydney, Australia — The Australasian Society for Ultrasound in Medicine (ASUM) is calling on the Australian Government to take urgent action to regulate the practice of ultrasound scanning and protect the professional title of "sonographer" amid growing concerns about non-medically referred "reassurance" scans being conducted by unqualified operators.

ASUM, the peak body representing health professionals who use ultrasound across Australia and New Zealand, has raised concerns about the risk to patients with Minister Butler.

The increasing prevalence of unregulated ultrasound services—particularly in obstetric settings—offered outside the formal healthcare system and often without the oversight of qualified medical professionals presents a risk to patient health and welfare.

“These so-called ‘reassurance scans can pose significant risks to public safety,” said ASUM President Jo McCann. “Without appropriate medical referral or qualified practitioners, patients are at risk of misdiagnosis, unnecessary psychological distress, or false reassurance, which can delay appropriate clinical care.”

Key concerns associated with unregulated ultrasound practices include:

- **Missed or inaccurate diagnoses** due to untrained or inadequately trained operators.
- **Public confusion** about the purpose and limitations of non-diagnostic ultrasound.
- **Improper use of equipment**, risking suboptimal imaging and unsafe exposure.
- **Emotional harm** caused by findings presented without clinical context or follow-up.

ASUM also wish to highlight the lack of title protection in Australia, which currently allows individuals without accredited sonography qualifications to advertise and practise as “sonographers”.

“The recent ABC 7:30 report broadcast on 29 May 2025 shines a spotlight on this issue and the concerning loopholes that undermine both public trust and professional standards,” Jo McCann said. “We cannot afford to wait for harm to occur before acting.”

ASUM is calling on the Government to:

1. Introduce formal **title protection** for "sonographer" under a national regulatory framework.
2. Mandate **national registration and scope of practice** standards for all diagnostic ultrasound practitioners.
3. Establish **governing oversight** for ultrasound services, modelled on the New Zealand Medical Radiation Technologists Board.

ASUM also emphasise the importance of increasing consumer awareness about the qualifications of accredited sonographers and the distinction between medical diagnostic ultrasound and unregulated "reassurance" scans.

"We are committed to working with government and health partners to educate the public and support the development of policies that safeguard patient wellbeing," Jo McCann, ASUM President.

About ASUM

The Australasian Society for Ultrasound in Medicine is dedicated to advancing the safe and effective use of ultrasound in healthcare through education, accreditation, and advocacy across Australia and New Zealand.

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About Australasian Society for Ultrasound in Medicine (ASUM)

ASUM is a multidisciplinary society promoting the highest standards in ultrasound through education, accreditation, and professional support.