



## **Canberra Mum takes on the Larapinta Challenge this Mother's Day**

The Australian Melanoma Research Foundations (AMRF) newest ambassador Fiona Kilby is an inspiration to us all. As Mother's Day approaches, Fiona Kilby - the mother of two and currently on her own melanoma journey is heading to Alice Springs to take on the Larapinta trek.

Fiona is passionate about sharing her story to inspire others to get regular skin checks but also in supporting melanoma research to improve outcomes for patients.

Fiona is the mother of 12-year-old Evan and eight-year-old Ana and although the family will surely miss Fiona on Sunday, they are delighted their mum will be experiencing the journey of a lifetime doing the six-day Larapinta trek with other passionate, melanoma supporters.

Melanoma is the most dangerous form of skin cancer and associated deaths exceed the Australian road toll annually. AMRF was established in 2006 to fund melanoma research to improve patient outcomes and support melanoma awareness, early detection and prevention programs.

"Research is saving lives," said Fiona. "In 2011, less than 10% of people with advanced melanoma survived. Thanks to research and progress in treatment, the survival rate today is greater than 50%. And if diagnosed early, melanoma can be successfully treated in more than 90% of cases".

Fiona is a keen trail-runner. She is young, fit and healthy so her melanoma diagnosis came as a shock. Fiona had always been careful about staying out of the sun, exercised in the early morning and used sunscreen. So, when Fiona was starting a run and had trouble setting the timer on her watch, she booked a doctor's appointment. By the next morning, Fiona couldn't move her arm. A week later, Fiona had a 3.5cm lesion, eventually identified as a stage 4, metastatic melanoma, removed from her brain. Skin and eye checks failed to find the source of Fiona's melanoma. Subsequently, further lesions were found and removed.

Fiona is now in remission and receives ongoing immunotherapy. She views her recovery and treatment like one of her trail runs. "There are uphill and downhill, although there have been some very hard and intense days." Fiona said.

"On Mother's Day, Fiona and the other AMRF Larapinta participants will be enjoying spectacular views of the high quartzite ridgeline that typify the West MacDonnell Ranges including Haast Bluff and Mount Zeil - the highest point in the Northern Territory. A nice reward for some outstanding fundraising efforts.

***Interviews with Fiona Kilby or Marisa Chilcott can be organised by contact 0422345426***

Here's the link [Ambassador – Australian Melanoma Research Foundation](#)