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SOLARIUM INDUSTRY REGULATED IN AUSTRALIAN FIRST

Victoria has taken the landmark step to regulate the solarium industry in an Australian first, the Health Minister Daniel Andrews announced today.

"In response to the increasing body of research on the harmful health effects of solarium use and the unprecedented community concern about the use of solaria, the Brumby Government announced in August that we would regulate this industry by the end of 2007," Mr Andrews said.

"The regulations, which come into force on 1 February 2008, have now been made and require solarium businesses to be licensed with the Department of Human Services.

"The regulations also make it illegal for anyone under the age of 16 to use a solarium and require 16- and 17-year-olds to provide parental consent."

Mr Andrews today paid tribute to the late Clare Oliver whose own fight with cancer and her campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of solarium use brought national attention to this issue.

"Clare's story raised awareness of the dangers of solaria and skin cancer. Her story and the new regulations will save lives," Mr Andrews said.

Key elements of the new regulations include:

- The display of mandatory health warnings;
- Solarium operators will now need to be licensed;
- Operators must ensure that nobody under 16 be permitted to use a sun-tanning unit;
- Operators must ensure that 16- and 17-year-olds can only use a sun-tanning unit with parental consent;
- Supervision of all solaria; and,
- The introduction of mandatory skin type assessments.

"These regulations have been developed in consultation with an industry group made up of concerned solarium operators, sun tanning bed suppliers, consumer organisations and the Cancer Council," he said.

"I raised the issue at the recent meeting of Commonwealth, State and Territory Health Ministers and will report back on the implementation of Victoria's regulations.

"With Victoria leading the way in regulating this sector, our experience will be of use to other states and territories considering a similar move.

"But regulating the industry is only part of the solution. To truly reduce the incidence of melanoma from UV exposure, we need to challenge the community belief that a tan is somehow a sign of good health."

Solarium operators who fail to license their business face fines of nearly \$1 million. The maximum penalty for a business that does not comply with its licence is \$660,720.