**About the Balint Society**

The Society was founded by a group of doctors, including general practitioners and psychiatrists, psychotherapists, and psychoanalytic psychotherapists. The Balint Society has grown rapidly over the last 12 years. It supports more than fifty Balint groups which are being run in Australia and New Zealand, and acts as a liaison organisation for information about these groups. Annually, since 2008, the Society has been running four-day Intensive Workshops in Australia or New Zealand, which include a leadership training focus. The Society was affiliated to the International Balint Federation in 2007.

**Professional Support**

While many clinicians join peer groups for professional discussions, most clinicans have little or no opportunities to share their professional experiences with each other, particularly their feelings and details of the more challenging situations in clinical practice. Clinicians may not articulate how emotionally difficult and complex their work can be and may not be aware that many of their colleagues are facing similar difficulties. Sharing these experiences in a Balint group provides tremendous mutual support.

**Professional Development**

In Balint groups, participants gradually learn to use their own feelings and responses to the patient to understand their patient better, rather than their responses becoming sources of stress or acted on in unhelpful ways. Clinicians are able to treat a wider variety of patients than before and do so more effectively with less personal stress. Patients once considered boring become interesting, while those thought of as difficult become a welcome challenge! Participants often report finding their work more stimulating and enjoyable, and feel their participation has reduced work stress and prevented or reversed potential burn-out.

**Recognised in Continuing Medical Education Programmes**

Membership of Balint groups is recognised for accreditation points in the Continuing Professional Development and the Continuing Medical Education programmes in Australia and New Zealand, by the respective Colleges of General Practice and Medical Councils. Refer to *Why Balint Groups* on the BSANZ Website at [*www.balintsocietyaustralianewzealand.org*](http://www.balintsocietyaustralianewzealand.org/)

A list of current groups and leaders’ contact details can be accessed from the link https://bit.ly/2MxpuDr