

## Position Statement

### Neurosurgeon claims about mobile phones and cancer

**April 8th, 2008**

In a self published online report, Canberra based neurosurgeon, Dr Vini Khurana, claims that there is compelling evidence of a link between mobile phone use and brain tumours. The report purports to undertake a wide ranging review of the literature on the subject of mobile phone use and the incidence of brain tumours, mostly based on epidemiological studies undertaken in the last decade or so. The review was not published in a peer reviewed journal and presents no new research findings.

While making strong claims that *“There is a growing and statistically significant body of evidence that brain tumours...are linked with “heavy” and “prolonged” mobile phone use...”*, the review is inexpert and incomplete, containing a number of factual errors. In particular, Khurana fails to consider the relative scientific quality of different studies. This produces an unbalanced analysis of the literature, which is also selective in support of the author’s claims.

The ACRBR recommends a ‘weight of evidence approach’ when reviewing the RF health effects literature, giving priority to the results of published, peer-reviewed and replicated scientific research. Hence, the epidemiological evidence regarding a possible association between RF exposure and brain tumours has not indicated a causal relationship. For example, “Interphone”, the largest study performed to date, has not found any consistent relationship between mobile phone use and brain tumours, although compilation of data from this study is incomplete. In a recent update on their website (see <http://www.iarc.fr/ENG/Units/INTERPHONEresultsupdate.pdf>), the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC, which co-ordinates the Interphone study) reports little evidence in the main analyses for an overall association between mobile phone use and an increase in the incidence of head and neck tumours. The ACRBR has completed a systematic review of all studies published so far (itself awaiting publication) and is also of this view, although this is contingent on the findings when the complete data from Interphone become available later this year.

It is also the view of the leading international health authority, the World Health Organisation (WHO) (<http://www.who.int/peh-emf/about/en/>) that research to date has not identified any association between mobile phone base stations and adverse health effects.

However, both the ACRBR and WHO agree there is a need for more research in certain areas to improve knowledge and better evaluate any possible health risk. In response to these concerns, the ACRBR has been funded by the Australian Government to conduct a wide-ranging program of research on neurological and behavioural aspects of mobile telephony, embracing epidemiological, human, animal and cellular studies. The ACRBR also specialises in the measurement and analysis of the absorption of energy from radio devices by biological systems, including humans.

**For more information call Professor Rodney Croft on (03) 9214 5149 or 0405 106 266**

**Or visit [www.acrbr.org.au](http://www.acrbr.org.au)**