

# The cost of skin cancer



## Suggested level

Years 10 and 11

## Prepare yourself (teacher)

Carry out some background research using the SunSmart website ([sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au)) to find out about the monetary cost and human cost of skin cancer.

## Class resources

- A3 paper
- textas
- Blu Tack
- copies of the Venn diagram (optional)

## The facts

- Over 1,850 Australians (1,244 men and 613 women) die from skin cancer each year.
- In young people aged 12 to 24 across Australia, melanoma is the most common cancer with more than double the number of cases than any other kind of cancer.
- Melanoma incidence rates in Australia and New Zealand are between two and five times as high as those found in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. Although mortality rates are quite low, they are still two to three times higher in Australia and New Zealand than in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom.
- Skin cancer treatment in Australia costs more than \$300 million each year. It is the most expensive of all cancers.

## The activity

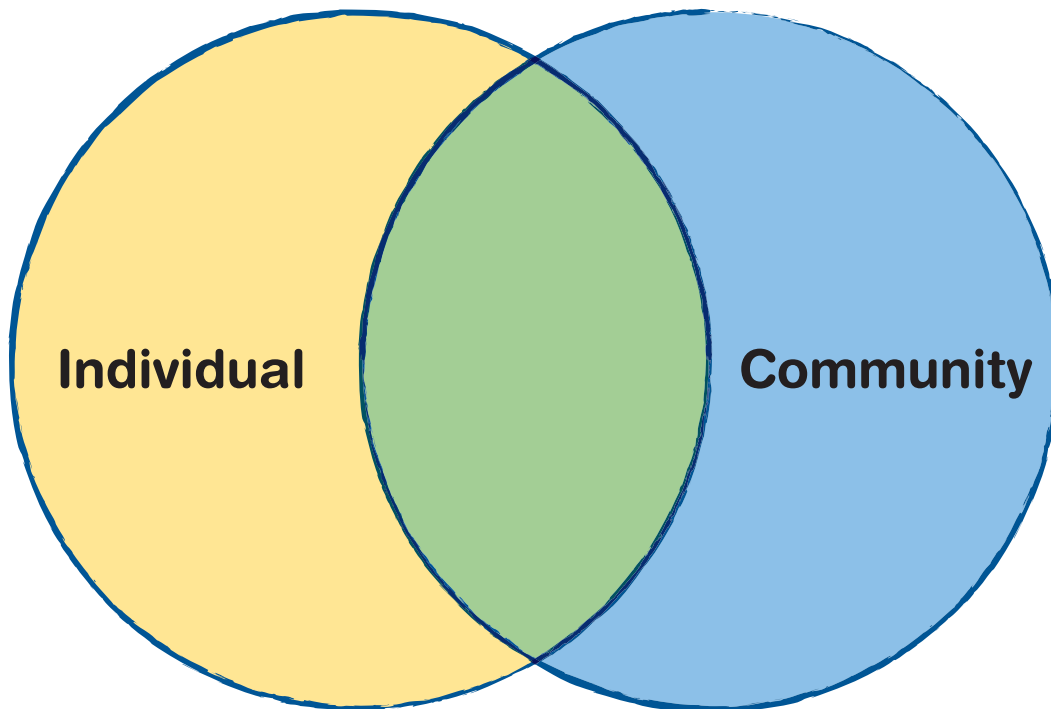
With students discuss the meaning of direct, indirect and intangible costs to health.

- **Direct:** Costs clearly and directly associated with an illness. E.g. financial cost of treatment and medication.
- **Indirect:** The value of lost output, lost production, absenteeism, increased insurance premiums, etc.
- **Intangible:** Consequences of ill health where a monetary cost cannot be attributed including pain, suffering and decreased quality of life.

Students work in groups to develop a series of three mind maps of the direct, indirect and intangible consequences of skin cancer.

Once the mind maps are developed, ask students to share their information with the rest of the class.

Each student then completes the Venn diagram below, outlining the impact of skin cancer on the individual and the community.



### Think about!

Doctors' visits, cost of not working while receiving treatment, effect on family members, colleagues picking up your workload, needing to have checks on a regular basis and not knowing what the results will be each time, etc.

### Extension activity

1. Account for the difference between melanoma deaths in men and women.
2. Outline the reasons why the most common sites for melanoma are the lower legs for women and the trunk for men and how this could affect health costs.