

## 6MINUTES NEWS

# 'It's all my son's fault,' says GP of running hobby

Dr Michelle Redford took up running 10 years ago and is advocating for other GPs to join the RACGP's parkrun initiative

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By Carmel Sparke

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Newcastle GP Dr Michelle Redford began running to keep up with her son, but now is such a convert, she's hoping to introduce GPs around the country to weekly community Parkrun Australia events.

The organisation has partnered with the RACGP to make GPs aware of the 450 free parkruns held across Australia each Saturday morning with the hope they will encourage patients to take part.

By signing up, GP practices will be listed on the parkrun practice map, and will be able to access online resources including posters and certificates.

Dr Redford, a health and wellbeing ambassador for Parkrun, credits her then five-year-old son for getting her into running in her 30s.



**Dr Michelle Redford.**

She had to accompany him around a one-mile fun run course in the UK, where they were living.

**“You have to run with them, and he was super keen, because he thought he was going to win it,” Dr Redford tells *6minutes*.**

“When we finished he wanted to do it again the next year, so I thought I'd better get into training.

“So that’s how it all started, it’s all his fault really.”

In 2013 she ran the whole 5km of a parkrun and a year later, when the family moved to Australia, Dr Redford sought out her local group in NSW.

A decade later she is planning to run her first marathon.

“It’s not even about the running anymore, that’s the interesting thing,” says Dr Redford.

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Dr Redford stresses becoming involved in Parkrun won’t involve an onerous commitment; GPs don’t have to accompany their patients and the events are not races.

Participants can walk, jog, run, volunteer or spectate.

“You can challenge yourself as much as you want and you can take from it what you want.

“You can run, and try to get faster, or you can walk and chat or volunteer.

“It’s also nice to be part of a bigger thing, knowing that across Australia, lots of other people are park running too at that time too,” she says.

### More information: [\*\*RACGP: Parkrun practice initiative\*\*](#)

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