



Dr Andrea Lung (2nd R) with (Left – right) Joanne Watkins, Matthew Richardson and Vin Martin ready for Park Run at Albert Park.

Picture: Hamish Blair

Prescription for good health

An Albert Park doctor is prescribing a popular social activity in a bid to help patients cut back on medication and visits to the GP.

Andrea Lung is championing Parkrun as a way of boosting mental, physical and social wellbeing — and she wants more doctors to do the same.

“I think doctors are often looked at as people who want to push medication but I’ve always been big on promoting lifestyle choices,” she said. “Parkrun is something concrete we can offer people as a way to improve their mental and physical health.

“I know a lot of my patients are lonely or feeling

Jordy Atkinson

isolated because they’ve moved countries or broken up with partners and Parkrun can offer them that social engagement they’re missing.”

Dr Lung is taking over Albert Parkrun on Saturday, July 27, to raise awareness of the many benefits of joining the free community event.

Dr Lung said she had been informally ‘prescribing’ Parkrun to her patients for a while but hoped the practice would soon get backing from the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

She said the move could save taxpayers money on unnecessary drugs and their side effects.

It comes after the group’s British counterpart last year partnered with Parkrun UK to allow doctor’s surgeries to become certified “Parkrun practices” and promote healthy living.

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners president Harry Nespolon would not confirm if the group would adopt the scheme but acknowledged exercise was “an important part of keeping healthy”. “Parkrun is a great example of a way people can get out of the house, meet new people and increase their physical activity,” he said.

Albert Parkrun is on every Saturday in Albert Park, leaving from the Coot Picnic Area at 8am.