



New leadership, shared direction: a strong foundation for the future

RACS officially welcomed Dr Phil Morreau and Dr Christine Lai as our new President and Vice President at the Congress dinner on Saturday night.

An Auckland-based paediatric surgeon, Dr Morreau brings a strong focus on surgical education and training and served as RACS' Censor-in-Chief for the past year.

Dr Lai is an Adelaide breast and endocrine surgeon who has sat on Council for eight years and served as Chair of the Professional Standards and Fellowship Services Committee since 2023.

Thanks go to outgoing President Professor Owen Ung for his leadership during a time of change for RACS. He will be remembered for his focus on constitutional reform, which helped restore financial discipline to the College and established a skills-based Board to work alongside Council, strengthening financial capability, accountability and decision-

making at the highest level of the organisation.

We welcome Dr Morreau and Dr Lai to their new positions as well as our new and re-elected Councillors.

Day three highlights

RACS AGM: financial discipline continues

The 2025 financial year marks another positive milestone for the College and a continuing commitment to member value. Building on the results of the previous two years, RACS has again achieved a modest operating surplus. At the RACS AGM on Saturday evening, delegates were told how the financial management framework introduced in recent years has strengthened the College's balance sheet and is ensuring its long-term stability. [Read the 2025 Annual Report.](#)

Trust, tech and what comes next

Saturday morning's plenary explored the future of surgery through the lens of trust, technology and human connection. Dr Jordan Nguyen shared powerful real-world innovations, while RACS Councillor Associate Professor Matthew Clarke and Chelsea Gordon unpacked how AI will reshape, not replace, the surgical workforce, emphasising collaboration, consent and better patient outcomes.

From Perth to India, live in the plenary

The future is now. Delegates attending Saturday afternoon's plenary *Collaborating with patients and industry* witnessed a live, cross-continent robotic surgery demonstration. Dr Mohit Bhandari (India) briefly controlling robotic instruments from Perth to perform part of a procedure on a patient in India, in real time.

Fast facts

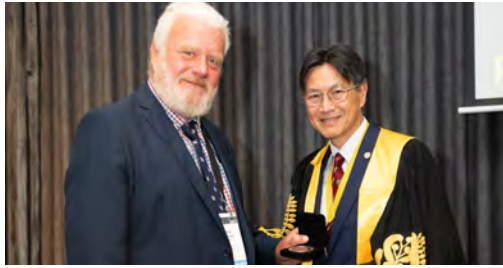
- Seventy-three per cent of nonfatal workplace injuries come from the healthcare industry in the US.
- By 2030, one in four surgeons plan to retire while 65+ population grows by over half.
- There are 5953 institutions worldwide that subscribe to the ANZ Journal of Surgery (2025 data), RACS' flagship research publication edited by Professor Julian Smith FRACS.
- One in four Pacific children in Aotearoa New Zealand live in maternal hardship - it's fewer than one in ten among Europeans - with impacts for health and wellbeing.
- Eighty-five per cent of women surgeons reported physical strain due to equipment not fitting their hands, compared to 40% of men surgeons.

Quote of the day

"How can a surgeon perform their duty if all aspects of a healthcare system have been targeted?"

- Dr Bushra Othman, Melbourne general surgeon, speaking on the lessons learnt from Gaza.

In pictures



Professor Owen Ung awards the Hamilton Russell Medal to Lt Col Steven Jeffery.



Chelsea Gordon and Dr Mohit Bhandari talk tech and the future of surgery.



Dr Jordan Nguyen greets fans after Saturday morning's plenary *AI future*.



Walking down the spinal cord of a patient's digital twin with Susan Halbherr.



RACS Indigenous Health Committee Chair Dr Ben Cribb (second from left) with New Zealand Medical Council Chair Dr Rachelle Love, with (L-R) Drs Nasya Thompson, Emma Wehipeihana and Jayme McNab-Hand and Saturday's Indigenous health breakfast.



A pop of colour at the Women in Surgery networking function (L-R): Dr Pecky De Silva, Amber George and Dr Ros Pochin.

Upcoming highlights

These are our top picks for the next 24 hours at the ASC.

Sunday 3 May

12:30-1:30pm - RACSTA lunch session - exam performance mindset and management (M8)

1:30-3:30pm - *Choice, change and chance: navigating the surgical career path* (M6)

1:30pm-3pm - The Michael Wertheimer Memorial Lecture - Dr Bushra Othman (Bellevue Ballroom 1)

1:30-3:30pm – *Fifteen years of safety and quality – lessons learnt from clinical quality registries for the next decade*

4:00pm-5:30pm – How I do it: Frontline decisions in modern trauma surgery (M7)

Missed a session? Don't forget your registration gives you access to on-demand presentation content for 12 months post-Congress.

[View the full program](#)



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