



## That's a wrap for ASC 2026 in Perth

What an amazing few days we had.

Thank you to all the delegates who joined us in-person and online. Thanks also to our presenters, both local and international, and our visiting dignitaries, including college and society presidents.

Special thanks must go to ASC Convener Associate Professor Mary Theophilus, Scientific Convener Associate Professor Rob Love, the ASC executive committee, and the section conveners for the many hours of time they put in to bringing an amazing Congress to life.

We're looking forward to doing it all again in Melbourne on 29 April-2 May 2027. Scroll down for more information about our centenary year ASC.

---

## Day four highlights

## **Up to the challenge: on the road to RACS' second century**

On the final day of the Congress we turned our gaze to ourselves, looking at issues of surgical culture, standards, compliance, and the role of our College as we prepare to step into our second century.

A highlight was hearing from Dr Rachelle Love, Christchurch otolaryngologist and Chair of the New Zealand Medical Council (MCNZ). Dr Love got "spicy" by challenging some of the common refrains she hears from surgeons.

Dr Love spoke as part of a closing plenary that included Ahpra CEO Justin Untersteiner and a panel discussion that also included President's Lecturer Professor Brendan Murphy, new RACS President Dr Philip Morreau and immediate past-President Professor Owen Ung.

Dr Morreau's comment that RACS wants to be "at the table, not part of the menu" made clear his intention to advocate and act on the key challenges facing the surgical profession during his tenure as president.

### **Women in Surgery breakfast and AGM 2026**

The 2026 Woman in Surgery breakfast and Annual General Meeting was well attended, bringing together surgeons and Trainees for discussion and recognition of achievement across the profession.

Keynote speaker Dr Clare McNaught, President of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (the first woman to hold the role since the college's establishment in 1505), spoke about the ongoing work required to close the gender gap in surgery. She highlighted the importance of using professional privilege to support and elevate others, and of actively recognising and advocating for one's own achievements.

New RACS President Dr Phil Morreau presented the annual Women in Surgery Essay Competition Award to Michaela Peters. This year's essay explored the statement: "When merit is equal, but diversity is not, the surgical profession should select for balance". The award includes complimentary flights, accommodation, and registration to attend the Annual Scientific Congress.

### **Building the rural pipeline: training, hubs and starting early**

Great insights from Dr Bridget Clancy, Dr Jessie Cole, Dr Richard Bradbury and Associate Professor Kerin Fielding, with a strong focus on the role of regional training hubs in supporting and strengthening the future rural surgical workforce. There was a clear emphasis on starting early with medical students.

---

## **Fast facts**

- Forty-three per cent of Indigenous Australians aged 7+ have measured hearing loss.
- Women make up 25% of the Australian General Surgery workforce, but less than four per cent within rural towns.
- Eighty-five per cent of surgical deaths occur outside of the operating theatre. Surgical Director of RACS' Research and Evaluation, inc. ASERNIP-S Professor Guy Maddern says surgeons must look beyond the theatre when assessing outcomes and improving patient safety.
- There were 1100 RACS goodie bags handed out.
- Fifty RACS Fellows completed their CPD at the RACS booth during the four days at the ASC.

---

## Quote of the day

*"It is fundamental to learn from today to make tomorrow better."*

- Professor Fiona Wood AM, burns specialist, on navigating the surgical career path.

---

## Expression of Interest: ASC 2028 Executive Committee

*Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) Annual Scientific Congress (ASC), May 2028*

Nominations are now open for Fellows across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand to join the ASC 2028 Executive Committee. Positions available include ASC Convener, Scientific Convener, and Executive Committee Members. Applicants must hold a FRACS and demonstrate the following:

- A strong history of involvement in RACS activities at multiple levels, with the ability to engage and network effectively with Fellows.
- Proven organisational skills, evidenced in their CV, including experience in organising an ASC as a Section Convener or Scientific Convener. Experience organising Specialty Section meetings will also be considered.
- A consistent record of attendance at ASC events, demonstrating an understanding of the scope and complexity of the Congress.

For more information and requirements, [please click here](#).

To express your interest, please email [conferences.events@surgeons.org](mailto:conferences.events@surgeons.org) by **Friday 12 June 2026**.

---

## In pictures



Dr Amanda Foster, representing our centenary year Congress, ASC 2027 (Melbourne, 29 April-2 May).



Dr Bridget Clancy (centre), Chair of Rural Health Committee, enjoying the night with RACS CEO Stephanie Clota (second from right) and colleagues at the Women in Surgery networking function.



Delegates gathering for a night of celebration at the Congress dinner.



Ifereimi Waqanabete from Fiji with RACS Surgical Advisor Associate Professor Sarah Rennie.



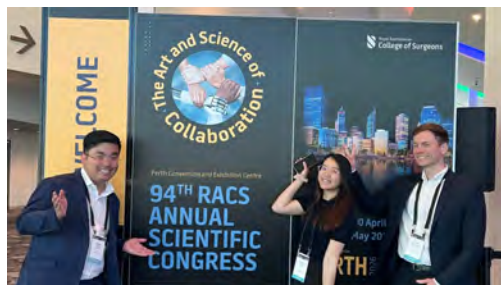
There's always time for a selfie with Professor Chris Pyke and RACS staff members.



Chair of the RACSTA Committee Dr Teagan Fink (second from right) and friends.



Thank you Dr Greg Keogh who celebrated his last day as ASC Conferences & Events Chair.



Striking a pose in front of the RACS welcome sign.

---

**Save the date for our centenary year ASC**



**100** A CENTURY OF SERVICE:  
THE FUTURE IS YOU

**95<sup>TH</sup> RACS  
ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC  
CONGRESS**

Thursday 29 April – Sunday 2 May 2027  
Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

**SAVE THE DATE**

asc.surgeons.org #RACS27

Destination Partners:

MELBOURNE Convention Bureau MELBOURNE Victoria Australia

Royal Australasian College of Surgeons 1927-2027 Celebrating 100 years

It might be a wrap for ASC 2026 but planning for next year's Congress is already well underway. We're marking our centenary year with an ASC that promises to be a fitting celebration of our past and future. We can't wait to see you in Melbourne.

**Can't wait that long?** There are many other ways to stay connected to your colleagues and College. [Bookmark our calendar](#) and find an event near you.

*ASC on Socials*

Stay updated on all things RACS ASC by following us on Facebook, X, Instagram and LinkedIn.

When posting about the Congress, tag us with #RACS26. Share your excitement and be part of the convention

