



Royal Australasian

**College of Surgeons**

*Te Whare Piki Ora o Māhutonga*

# Raumati

[Issue 1]

1 November 2024





---

## In this issue

- Pūhoro STEMM roadshow
  - Hui ki Te Whanganui a Tara
  - Wānanga Whakarite.
  - Te ORA Hui a Tau ki Rotorua
  - Te Oranga Māori Students Association
  - Rangahau– Research
  - Join the academy
- 

## Pūhoro—That’s a wrap!



**John Mutu Grigg, an Orthopaedic surgeon from Ngāti Kahu / Te Rarawa with a group of students at AUT Campus in Manukau City, Auckland**

Pūhoro STEMM is a Māori focussed careers expo held annually in multiple locations around Aotearoa New Zealand. The roadshow is aimed at Māori secondary school students considering a career in the Science and Technology fields that also utilise Mātauranga Māori (Traditional knowledge encompassing a Māori world view).

Pūhoro has many sponsors from the Science and Education sector and RACS and Johnson and Johnson MEDTECH have contributed to the event for the past two years through the Foundation for Surgery and Johnson & Johnson Education Grants

This year three Māori Health Advisory Group and two medical students volunteered their time to present at 6 sessions in Auckland, Whanganui, Manawatū and Whāngarei. If you would like to help out next year let us know!

*“One of the activities that I did was trying to unwrap a lollie using surgical tools, we did this to try and replicate a blood vessel. I enjoyed this because although it looked easy it was a lot harder than it seemed.”*

---



---

## Hui-ā-tau ki Te Whanganui-a-tara

### *Te āhuareka a te nohotahitanga a te teina me te tuakana*



The inaugural hui a tau for Te Rau Poka was held in Te Whanganui - a-Tara at Taraika ki Pukeahu marae at Wellington High School.

The theme of the gathering was Tuakana– Teina, bringing together senior and junior surgeons and medical students.

Research presentations by Jason Gurney, Nic Sinnott and Nasya Thompson highlighted some of the challenges for our trainees and Māori medical students.

Rob Hewitt, a former navy diver spoke about his experience being lost at sea for three days and shared the personal challenges that he faced each day floating with the currents. Rob is a truly inspirational storyteller.

The conference dinner was held at Wharewaka Cultural events centre where Rereata presented his whakaaro on the intersection between Mātauranga Māori and Science.

Invitations were extended to specialty societies and Aotearoa New Zealand tumu whakarae (GM) Michele Thomas and Chair of the AONZ National Committee Ros Pochin. We also invited Māori colleagues from the other Medical Colleges.

Overall the hui was enjoyed by all and the feedback from participants will be taken on board. We hope to have the next hui at the same time and place in early August 2025.



#### **Participants feedback**

- *“I enjoyed every part of this noho/hui! I would definitely recommend this to other newly graduated takuta and tauira”.*
- *“Encourage more teina and tauira to attend.”*
- *“Felt we were missing some tākuta in between senior reg/consultant level and very new house officers.”*



# Wānanga Whakarite

## SET Selection Preparation Workshop



*Tēnei te tira hou e haere ake nei: A new generation is rising*

Wānanga Whakarite 2024—A SET preparation workshop run by Dr Lincoln Nicholls and colleagues was sponsored by RACS through Te Rau Poka. This year the wānanga was held in Wellington on the 25-26 May and was deemed successful by all those in attendance. Hūrō! Congratulations! Here is a summary of the event

- There were 8 interviewing teina, 7 non-interviewing teina, and 13 tuākana who attended this year's Wānanga = 28 in total.
- 100% of the interviewing Teina were selected onto training positions and all 8 start their training in 2025. Five were selected to General Surgery, two selected to Orthopaedics, and one selected to Ophthalmology.
- 100% of those selected onto training have indicated they want to return to next year's Wānanga as a tuakana. All teina felt that the wānanga helped prepare them for their interviews.

### Ngā Teina



### Ngā Tuakana







The Te Ohu Rata o Aotearoa AGM was held in Rotorua from 25-28th September this year. RACS is a major sponsor of Te ORA and the Māori Health Advisory Group showed their support for Te ORA by holding their annual “kanohi ki te kanohi” hui in Rotorua prior to the AGM. RACS also attended Te Rā Tuhura careers expo.

This meant we had three surgeons in the whare to demonstrate their surgical skills and also promote surgery as an option for the 60 + Māori medical students and a dozen or so taura from Te Wharekura o Ruamatā. The students came around in small groups and this ensured they could all have a go at suturing a wound and drilling into a hip or knee bone.

John Mutu-Grigg, Alison Scott and Ben Cribb represented their respective specialties in the Shark Tank 3-minute pitch and the

College walked away with the best stand of the show for the second year in a row!

Head of Aotearoa New Zealand office Michele Thomas, Di Waters and Ruth Herd were kept busy handing out merchandise bags to the participants.

Awesome work everyone!

**Above: John Mutu-Grigg accepted the award on behalf of the team and sent us this photo from the Te ORA Awards dinner.**



At the end of last year, Te Oranga President Nic Sinnot and Te Rau Poka lead Jonathan Koea, signed **Te Mana Whakaaetanga**— an agreement to work together to support any aspiring surgeons coming through the two University Medical Schools. The deal was sealed with a sponsorship of \$12,000 to assist Te Oranga with their Hui a Tau AGM and Kura Reo that attracts many keen participants.

Jonathan has presented at past Te Oranga hui a tau and this year attended his first Kura Reo, a total immersion Māori language course held



at marae. Participants stay together over the weekend and only use te reo Māori to communicate.

Nic Sinnot was invited to attend the Te Rau Poka hui a tau to present the findings of research undertaken by Te Oranga on the experiences of Māori medical students in hospitals. Rather than focus on the negative, Nic framed the results with recommendations that will support the work that Te Rau Poka is doing to ensure that Māori students are supported on their journey. Ka mau te wehi Nic and team!

---

## Advancing Māori representation in surgery— Supports and Barriers.

At the beginning of the year, Dr Nasya Thompson, a surgical intern at Christchurch Hospital was contracted by (RACS), to undertake a research project to identify systemic barriers, and explore opportunities for enhancing supports to ensure equitable pathways into surgery for Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand.

This study aims to evaluate existing support mechanisms, delve into the systemic barriers faced by Māori students and doctors, and explore opportunities for enhancing support to ensure equitable pathways into surgery for Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand.

This research will utilize a qualitative study design, conducting surveys and semi-structured interviews to collect comprehensive data from Māori doctors at all levels of training.

The interview questions for this study are designed to capture a broad range of experiences and insights from Māori tauira, junior doctors, and surgical trainees.

Nasya presented an overview of the research at the ASC in Ōtautahi Christchurch in the Indigenous plenary session and update on her progress at the Te Rau Poka hui a tau in Wellington. There is still time to take part in the research. Here is the link to the survey monkey:

[Te Rau Poka - representation in surgery \(medical students/ HOs\)](#)

### Whakapā mai— get in touch

Dr Nasya Thompson: [thona663@student.otago.ac.nz](mailto:thona663@student.otago.ac.nz) or 0278460376

Professor Jonathan Koea: [Jonathan.koea@waitematadhb.govt.nz](mailto:Jonathan.koea@waitematadhb.govt.nz)

Dr Ruth Herd: [ruth.herd@surgeons.org](mailto:ruth.herd@surgeons.org) 02102705824



---

## Whakapiri mai! Join Te Rau Poka Māori Surgical Academy

*Tēnei au, tēnei au ko te hōkai nei taku tapuwae  
Ko te hōkai nuku, ko te hōkai rangi  
Ko te hōkai a tō tupuna a Tāne Nui A Rangi*

Te Rau Poka refers to the pursuit of excellence in surgery but in a holistic sense, encompassing all aspects of one's being, such as physical, mental, spiritual and cultural.

It represents a core value in Māori culture, which emphasises the importance of striving for excellence and maintaining a balanced way of life. This concept can be understood through the pūrakau(legend) of Tāne's journey to the heavens.

Te Rau Poka provides support and guidance to Māori interested in surgical careers, creating a pipeline of taura (students) from secondary school onwards to surgical leadership roles.

If you wish to join the Academy, please scan the QR code and fill out the form. We will send you information about RACS Scholarships and free events we will be organising in 2025.

Check out our webpage on [Te Rau Poka – Māori Surgical Academy | RACS](#)

