

RACS MANIFESTO FOR ELECTION 2026

THREE KEY COMMITMENTS WE SEEK BEFORE THE 2026 ELECTION

1. Workforce

Commit to planning, growing, and retaining a surgical workforce capable of meeting current and future need for safe, effective and timely surgical care within an adequately resourced health system.

- a. **Workforce planning** - commit to planning and resourcing a surgical workforce capable of addressing unmet need now and in future for safe, effective and timely surgical care
- b. **Surgical trainees** - commit to immediate resourcing of sufficient additional surgical training positions, including collaborative public-private training partnerships
- c. **Surgeons** - commit to employment and retention of additional surgeons, including International Medical Graduates (IMGs) to meet current and future needs for surgical services, and for the supervision and leadership roles they also deliver
- d. **Allied surgical workforce** - commit to employing sufficient additional allied surgical workforce to meet current and future needs for surgery

2. Needs-based equitable healthcare

Commit to making evidence-based decisions on the allocation of resources to address unmet need for surgical care whilst achieving needs-based equitable access to safe, effective and timely surgery for our diverse communities.

- a. **Evidence-based decisions** - commit to acknowledging there is already substantial evidence supporting ethnicity as a key determinant of health for Māori, [other population groups], and rural communities,
- b. **Data** - commit to investing in high quality ethnicity and rurality/post-code data to support design of healthcare interventions
- c. **Workforce** - commit to supporting RACS in developing a surgical workforce which reflects the Māori, Pacific and rural profile of the population in Aotearoa; including 150 fully trained Māori surgeons by 2040.

3. Accelerate investment in better infrastructure

Commit to planning and accelerating investment in better data, digital, physical, and sustainable infrastructure to support the public healthcare system so we can meet current and future demand for surgery:

- a. **Digital and data infrastructure** - commit to accelerating investment in interoperable digital and data systems to enable seamless flow of information nationally between public and private providers so we can provide seamless care and improve patient safety
- b. **Physical infrastructure** - commit to planning for and investment in operating theatres, procedural suites and availability of inpatient beds to remove constraints on meeting current and future demand for both acute and planned surgery
- c. **Sustainability** - commit to strengthening environmental sustainability, including climate mitigations, within the healthcare system

Dr Sharon English FRACS
Chair, Aotearoa New Zealand National Committee
27 July 2026

