

Business Plan

2022



Table of contents

- 4 — Introduction
- 5 — About RACS
- 6 — Strategic Plan
- 8 — Leading a sustainable future for surgery
- 10 — Serving all communities equitably
- 12 — Enhancing member value
- 14 — Operational excellence

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RACS Business Plan 2022

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Committed to Indigenous health

Service | Integrity | Respect | Compassion | Collaboration

Vision
*Advancing surgery,
embracing innovation*

Mission
*To improve access, equity, quality and
delivery of surgical care that meets
the needs of our diverse communities*



Introduction from the President

Dear colleagues

RACS 2022 Business Plan outlines the first year of the College’s implementation of RACS Strategic Plan 2022-2024.

Building a culture of respect remains a focus of what we do, with an independent expert advisory group providing a series of recommendations in 2022 after a through review of the last six years’ implementation of the Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety action plan. Key themes embedding gender equity and embracing diversity, promoting rural equity, championing Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori health, and our collaboration with surgical specialty societies and associations have been adopted while underpinning the College’s key priorities.

The business plan provides an overview of the key priority areas, highlighting specific initiatives and indicators in line with the College’s strategic objectives and priorities.

- Leading a sustainable future for surgery
- Serving all communities equitably
- Enhancing member value
- Operational excellence

In 2022, under these priorities, five Flagship programs are featured, demonstrating collaborative efforts from across the organisation’s five portfolio areas to achieve our objectives.

1. Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety: From Awareness to Action
2. Implementing the Rural Health Equity Strategy
3. Championing Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Māori health
4. Advocating for workforce and health care sustainability
5. Improving our services

Dr Sally Langley
President, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons

About RACS

RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. College staff support RACS’ strategic priorities working across five portfolios from local offices across the Australian states, territories and Aotearoa New Zealand.

Education Partnership

This area focuses on supporting our collaborative model of surgical education in partnership with the surgical specialty societies and associations. The portfolio delivers the Australian Department of Health Specialist Training Program through funding specialist training posts in non-traditional settings such as private, rural and regional hospitals and includes support for Specialist International Medical Graduate (SIMG) assessment. In 2022, an area of focus will be onboarding training programs onto the College’s new Training Management Platform to deliver an improved training experience.

Education Development and Delivery

Leading the College’s development of world-class curricula in conjunction with the surgical specialty societies and associations to select, train and sustain surgeons to provide the best patient care defines this area. The portfolio coordinates the College’s work in support of maintaining Australian Medical Council and Medical Council of New Zealand Accreditation for the College’s education programs. In 2022, a focus for the portfolio will be developing a comprehensive training monitoring and evaluation framework to guide the continuous improvement of RACS’ educational programs.

Fellowship Engagement

Promoting engagement with College Fellows and key stakeholders, this portfolio engages Fellows at a local level through supporting RACS Australian state and territory committees and Aotearoa New Zealand national committee. In collaboration with specialty societies, local and national governments and

key stakeholders, the portfolio leads College advocacy including workforce and environmental sustainability. The portfolio develops and maintains surgical standards including the College’s Continuing Professional Development program (CPD). In 2022, a focus will be the continued development of new online tools to support Fellows in undertaking their CPD and ensuring the College provides a CPD home for all surgeons in line with anticipated changing regulatory standards.

Operations

This portfolio oversees the provision of financial and technological shared services across all portfolios and College offices. The portfolio leads the delivery of essential services for our communities through the global health program across our region and through the Foundation for Surgery awarding over \$2,000,000 for surgical research, global health and indigenous health. The Conference and Events team deliver the RACS Annual Scientific Congress and support surgical specialty societies and associations in delivering their own specialty specific meetings and events. In 2022, the portfolio will continue to support the College’s work in building a culture of respect leading the management of formal complaints.

Office of the CEO

The Office of the CEO provides organisational leadership and direct support for the College Council, President and Vice-President’s office. The People and Culture team supports staff wellbeing, leads strategies for performance and development and creates a positive culture promoting achievement. Strategic marketing and communications for Fellows, Trainees and SIMGs and staff are coordinated across the College delivering key information through *Surgical News*, *Fax Mentis*, social media and the *Pulse* intranet. In 2022, a key focus is the response to key recommendations from the evaluation of RACS Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety program and implementation of the next phase of the action plan.

Vision and Mission

VISION	MISSION
Advancing surgery, embracing innovation	To improve access, equity, quality and delivery of surgical care that meets the needs of our diverse communities

Building a Culture of Respect

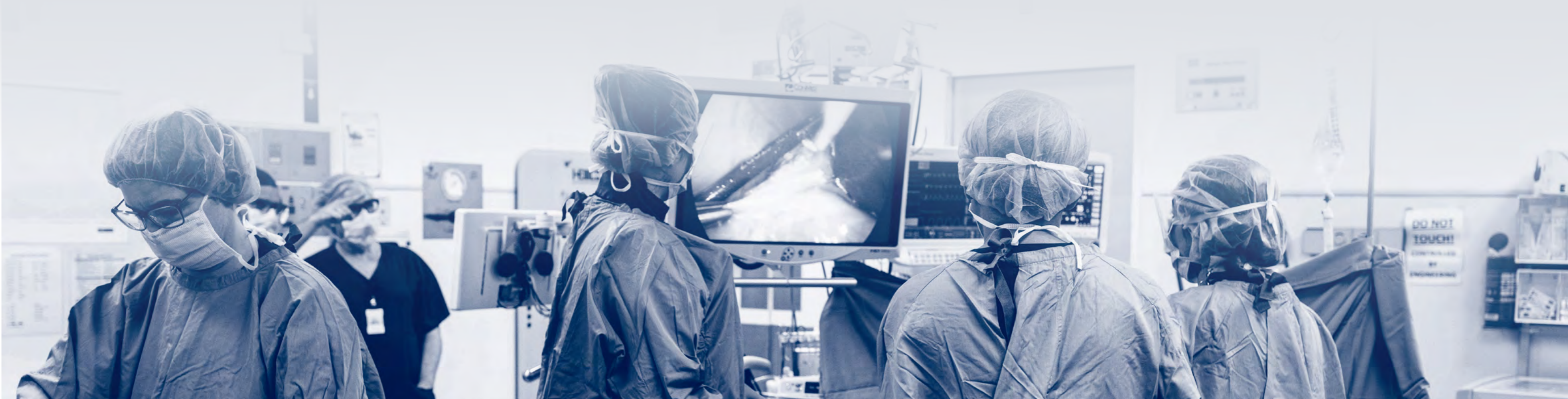
Embedding gender equity and embracing diversity	Promoting rural equity, strengthening the workforce and reducing maldistribution	Championing Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori health	Collaborating with surgical specialty societies and associations
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Priorities

LEADING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR SURGERY	SERVING ALL COMMUNITIES EQUITABLY	ENHANCING MEMBER VALUE	OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE
Lead new resilient and sustainable models of education, training, examination and research	Partner across the community, locally and globally to build sustainable surgical services	Establish a deep understanding of our membership and value across the membership lifecycle	Modernise our organisational structures, processes, reporting, benchmarking, decision-making and people capability
Grow and diversify services for Fellows, Trainees and SIMGs to ensure long term sustainability and growth	Champion equity in Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori healthcare outcomes, delivery and education	Improve engagement between the College and members through new methods and offerings, including being clear about RACS' role and how it complements societies and organisations	Streamline governance models
Lead the development of respectful, diverse and inclusive cultural leadership across the profession	Reduce rural health inequity through increasing surgical workforce and reducing workforce maldistribution	Advocate for the role of surgery and lead the profession across the health system	Promote a culture of trust and respect between Fellows and College staff
Promote environmental sustainability in surgical practice and contribute to addressing climate change	Champion patient centered and sustainable healthcare across the sector	Embed gender equity and embrace diversity	Improve and simplify interactions with the College by leveraging technology to develop and lead an eco-system for surgeons

Values

SERVICE	RESPECT	INTEGRITY	COMPASSION	COLLABORATION
Our service is to the surgical profession and the Australian, Aotearoa New Zealand and surrounding communities.	Our behaviours are reflected in the positive esteem and high regard we display towards others.	Our integrity is demonstrated through our uncompromising adherence to the moral and ethical principles of the medical profession.	Our compassion is displayed through the sensitivity and care we provide for the physical, mental and emotional needs of our patients, colleagues and ourselves.	Our leadership is strongest through the partnerships and relationships we cultivate and nurture on behalf of College staff, Fellows and the broader community.



Leading a sustainable future for surgery

Flagship initiative: Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety: From Awareness to Action

“Now is the time for action. Six years have built awareness and understanding of the need to operate with respect. We are now looking for actions to foster professional behaviour that keep teams performing at their best and patients safe.”

Expert Advisory Group 2022

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) has re-convened an Expert Advisory Group (EAG) to review the progress made by the College community since 2015 to build respect and improve patient safety in surgery, and to advise on a framework for future action.

The EAG recognises that the College has prioritised identifying and addressing a serious problem and that an ambitious program of work involving the entire College community has been rolled out. Awareness and support in the surgical community is high. Behaviour is changing, in intended and unintended ways. Yet many challenges remain.

The next phase of the Building Respect work – moving from awareness of the link between unprofessional conduct and patient safety to action to address this conduct – reiterates our understanding that cultural and behavioural change requires a sustained and multi-faceted approach. Building on progress made so far, the EAG has presented 40 new recommendations for RACS’ consideration. A proposed refresh of the three existing pillars of work (Cultural change and leadership, Surgical education and Complaints management) and eight goals is detailed in the EAG’s comprehensive report.

Eight further core features are the hallmarks of the recommendations made by the EAG in 2022 of the proposed

approach to supporting long term cultural change are outlined: leadership; professionalism; cultural safety, diversity and gender equity, including an explicit focus on eliminating racism; contemporary governance; data and transparency; speaking up and feedback; collaboration and partnerships; language and communication; independent scrutiny.

A major enabler will be the continued support of Specialty Societies, Specialty Training Boards and groups external to the College such as hospitals and employers, medical colleges, and governments. This strategy – from awareness to action – applies across all domains and areas of work.

EAG 2022 commends the College’s long-term commitment to continuing this work and recommends an explicit renewed commitment to it.



Objectives	Initiatives	KPIs	Responsible
1) Lead new resilient and sustainable models of education, training, examination and research.	– Foster the adoption of new technology, techniques and workforce models	– Training Management Platform – new capabilities added and scoping for SIMG assessment integration – One or more Specialty Training Boards implement the RACS Professional Skills Curriculum – Training program Monitoring & Evaluation Framework developed	– Education Partnerships – Education Development and Delivery – Education Development and Delivery
	– Establish partnerships to expand and optimise training offerings	– Establish partnership for robotic-assisted surgical training program	– Education Development and Delivery
2) Grow and diversify services for Fellows, Trainees and SIMGs to ensure long term sustainability and growth.	– Support a sustainable College and make efficient use of resources	– Develop strategy for sustainable service delivery – Diversified Membership Category Proposal presented to Council	– Operations – Fellowship Engagement
3) Lead the development of respectful, diverse and inclusive cultural leadership across the surgical profession.	– Implement phase two of the Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety Action Plan	– Recommendations presented from Expert Advisory Group – New Building Respect Improving Patient Safety action plan launched	– CEO Office – CEO Office
4) Promote environmental sustainability in surgical practice and contribute to addressing climate change.	– Continue College office refits with focus on sustainability	– Improved energy efficiency and renewable generation in the Melbourne office	– Operations
	– Advocacy and education for Fellows on sustainable surgical practice	– Environmental Sustainability in Surgical Practice Events	– Fellowship Engagement

Serving all communities equitably

Flagship initiatives: Rural Health Equity Strategy and Indigenous Health

RURAL HEALTH EQUITY STRATEGY

In October 2020, the RACS Council approved the implementation of its inaugural Rural Health Equity Strategic Action Plan (Strategy) for rural health equity as an area of focus across all RACS portfolios. The Strategy is a flagship initiative for RACS in 2022 and beyond. It demonstrates the commitment to our social responsibility and mission to address health inequity for underserved communities living in rural, provincial, regional, and remote locations in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

2022 will bring delivery against actions in the Strategy, such as a supporting an evidence resource for assessing rural hospitals in training post accreditation applications, and the development of specific strategies in support of rural health equity in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Recently, the Australian Government Department of Health released its 2021-31 National Medical Workforce Strategy (NMWS). The impact on RACS by the NMWS and its themes are substantial and will significantly influence the work of RACS and speciality societies to ensure the desired outcomes are delivered. Failure of specialist medical colleges to deliver on the actions in the NMWS may lead to changed policy settings to achieve those.

RACS is well positioned to be a leader in the implementation of the NMWS, given its alignment with RACS' own strategic objectives, but we will have to actively monitor our performance against the NMWS on an ongoing basis. Much of what is included is already addressed within the Rural Health Equity Strategy and its white papers, however ongoing investment is required to complete the work.

INDIGENOUS HEALTH

The College's priorities in developing a culturally safe and culturally competent surgical workforce is set out in RACS Reconciliation Action Plan and Te Rautaki Māori – RACS Māori Health Strategy and Action Plan. Two principle areas of focus are supporting Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori doctors interested in surgical careers and providing cultural competence and cultural safety training for surgeons.

In 2022, Specialty Training Boards are arranging for the delivery of cultural training with respect to RACS cultural competence and cultural safety competency and initiatives relating to Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori Surgical recruitment. Currently, Urology, Neurosurgery and Paediatric Training Boards are scheduled for delivery of the training in 2022. In addition to College programs, the College is collaborating with key partners such as the Māori Indigenous Health Institute, and the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association.

The Foundation for Surgery is supporting a pilot of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori Surgical Trainee leads who will support Indigenous surgical Trainees and prospective Trainees in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. The aim is for the role to commence 1 July 2022.

A focus on reviewing current and developing new Indigenous doctor engagement strategies will continue. This includes the ongoing implementation of the Australian Indigenous Surgical Pathways program and development of an implementation guide for surgeons interested in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors into surgical careers.



Objectives	Initiatives	KPIs	Responsible
1) Partner across the community, locally and globally, to build sustainable surgical services.	– Leverage existing global health partnerships in preparation for increased localisation of workforce capacity	– Number of specialty surgeons and specialty nurses in the region participating in accredited training – Number of patients in the region receiving surgical care	– Operations – Operations
	– Further develop our relationships with societies	– Seven specialty association agreements finalised	– CEO Office
	– Support increased impact and reach in our communities through Foundation for Surgery	– Increased engagement with current and potential donors	– Operations
2) Champion equity in Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori healthcare outcomes, delivery and education.	– Reconciliation Action Plan – Te Rautaki Māori	– Number of new indigenous Trainees/new Fellows – Number of Fellows, Trainees and SIMGs undertaking cultural competency and cultural safety training	– Fellowship Engagement – Fellowship Engagement
	– Implementation of RACS Rural Health Equity Strategy in Australia – Development of Aotearoa New Zealand priorities	– Fund/Fill 65 FTE STP training posts in 2022 – Fund/Fill 8.4 FTE Tasmanian Project positions in 2022 – Northern Territory Pilot Program established – Action AoNZ Rural Health Equity Strategy positions in 2022	– Education Partnerships – Education Partnerships – Fellowship Engagement – Fellowship Engagement
3) Reduce rural health inequity through increasing the rural surgical workforce and reducing workforce maldistribution.	– Community representation mapped – Roles advertised and reps appointed	– Community representatives engaged on Specialty Training Boards	– Education Partnerships

Enhancing member value

Flagship initiative: Advocating for patients

Advocacy for improvements in patient care, workforce and health system sustainability is a core function of the College. Working in collaboration with specialty surgical societies and associations, other colleges and key stakeholders, the College leads the development and promulgation of principled positions on issues of public health. Health policy is managed both nationally by the Australian federal government and by the government in Aotearoa New Zealand, and with the bulk of responsibility in Australia for governance and the provision of services spread across the state and territories.

The College has prioritised advocacy to meet a range of key objectives as part of the College’s Strategic Plan 2022-2024. Some of these objectives include:

- advocating for the role of surgery and the profession’s leading role in the health care system
- reducing inequities in rural health, Indigenous health, global health and promoting diversity within the profession
- championing patient centered and sustainable health care through improved services and trauma care
- promoting environmental sustainability in surgical practice and addressing climate change
- engagement across the profession.

With the continued impact of COVID-19 on health systems across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, RACS advocacy governance will continue to be a strength in representing the needs of patients and the profession. This will include strong local engagement with governments from Australian State and Territory Committees and the Aotearoa New Zealand National Committee. Coordination provides an opportunity for

Fellows working in different jurisdictions to compare the impacts of differing policy responses in anticipation of potential changes locally.

Following introduction in 2021, RACS’ Health Policy and Advocacy Committee provides strategic support to Council on national and bi-national issues. In 2022, this will include a key focus on issues impacting sustainability in healthcare and environmental sustainability in surgical practice as part of Australia’s national election.

Objectives	Initiatives	KPIs	Responsible
1) Establish a deep understanding of our membership and the value across the membership lifecycle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Tailor professional development and wellbeing offerings to support members as individuals based on individual career and lifestyle need– Delivering ‘best of both worlds’ hybrid ASC and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Review current PD offerings identify gaps for new resource development– 50% reduction in current backlog of 48 specialist assessment applications. Based on a full complement of staff.– 80% of participants satisfied with both face to face and online formats	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Education Development and Delivery– Education Partnerships– Operations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Tailor the membership experience based on their previous interaction, current study level, career advancement– Tell compelling stories promoting RACS strategic priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Increase the number and diversity of applicants for scholarships and grants Fellows and Trainees– Open and click through rates, web, email and social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Operations– CEO Office
2) Improve engagement between the College and members through new methods and offerings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Fellowship Survey undertaken in 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– 80% of Fellows satisfied with RACS– 80% of Fellows satisfied with RACS work in partnership with specialty societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Fellowship Engagement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Expand educational offering to include capability uplift in supporting skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Develop online teaching skills module as part of Faculty Teaching Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Education Development and Delivery
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Increase the focus on priority services CPD, Library and Audit etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Deliver CPD homes strategy– Develop data interpretation service and expand evidence review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Fellowship Engagement– Fellowship Engagement
3) Advocate for the role of surgery and become the lead representative of the profession across the health system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Lead national and jurisdictional advocacy campaigns that improve outcomes for patients and patient care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Number of requests for policy input from government/key stakeholders– Number of submissions resulting in adoption of College policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Fellowship Engagement
4) Embed gender equity and embrace diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Promote surgical careers with focus on increasing diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Increase in number of women selected into surgical training– Increase in number of women new Fellows– Diversity of representation in surgical leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Education Partnerships– Education Partnerships– Education Development and Delivery

Operational Excellence

Flagship initiative: Improving our services

RACS Fellows, Trainees and SIMGs increasingly interact with the College through digital channels and have high expectations in terms of simplicity, personalisation and ease of use. Over time the College has invested in a range of systems to support the needs of our Fellows, Trainees and SIMGs. A focus in 2022 is the continued harmonisation of these systems using a single database to provide a simple and consistent experience. This work will support the ability of the College to personalise existing and future digital products that are relevant to an individual’s specialty, career stage and interests.

The shift in the last two years towards hybrid in person and online events has accelerated the need to support a variety of accessibility options for courses, workshops and meetings. A focus on improving audio-visual equipment to ensure high quality hybrid interactions and improved security for Fellows, Trainees and SIMGs accessing College systems remotely is a key priority.

2022 will see the development and delivery of two key platforms for Fellows, Trainees and SIMGs to manage their ongoing learning.

TRAINING MANAGEMENT PLATFORM

The online Training Management Platform will replace manual processes of filling out forms and logging training requirements and research. This will support both Trainees and supervisors to log activities and requirements in alignment with managing posts, rotations and Surgical Education and Training (SET) curriculum requirements. Three Specialty Training Boards will be onboarded to the new platform in early 2022, with opportunities to expand access and functionality later in the year.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT APP

In 2021, RACS released a new online continuing professional development framework to support Fellows to keep their CPD activities up to date. In 2022, the College will continue to deliver new functionality for the CPD program based on feedback from Fellows. The first release will be a new CPD app to make it easier for Fellows to collect and update their CPD activities on their preferred device.



Objectives	Initiatives	KPIs	Responsible
1) Modernise our organisational structures, processes, reporting, benchmarking and decision-making capability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Capability to enable us to become agile, flexible, resilient, responsive and sustainable– Embed a focus on measured outcomes across the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– 80% of Fellows satisfied with RACS services– 80% of staff satisfied with RACS systems– 80% of Fellows satisfied with RACS delivery of Surgical Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Fellowship Engagement– CEO Office– Education Partnerships
2) Streamline governance models.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Streamlined structures, communication and transparency to reduce complexity, increase agility, improve alignment and expand opportunities for member engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Board of Council review/ recommendations implemented– Piloting new governance and engagement processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– CEO Office
3) Promote a culture of trust and respect between Fellows and College staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Supporting staff wellbeing through period of uncertainty. Introduction of new professional development framework and promoting achievements through reward and recognition program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– 80% report positive relationships between Fellows and staff– 80% staff recommend College as a place to work to peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– CEO Office
4) Improve and simplify interactions with the College by leveraging technology to develop and lead an eco-system for surgeons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Invest in and trial new innovate training technologies to enhance education and training offerings including: CPD app, Training Management Platform, Dynamics modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– 80% of Fellows satisfied with RACS online services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Operations

