



Mina Advisory Group

RACS Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health Advisory



The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander motif

The motif design was created to symbolise RACS' commitment to help Close the Gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health across Australia. With dual concepts in mind, it features two snakes winding around the winged staff symbolising medicine and can also be seen as Rainbow Serpents entwined together carving out the land, creating our rivers and mountains. The white dotted pathways descend from the mountains, flow through the rivers and ascend back to the skies reforming as rainbows, the spirit of the Serpent. Symbolic of medicine, the two snakes winding around the winged staff also symbolise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous people coming together. The heights of the rainbow also symbolise greater professional equity as well as improved health, social and economic wellbeing for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities across Australia. The motif was developed by Marcus Lee. Born and raised in Darwin, he is a descendant of the Karajarri people and is proud of his Aboriginal heritage.



Image source: Dick Roughsey, The Rainbow Serpent, 1976

Rainbow Serpent

The Rainbow Serpent is one of a number of important ancestral beings that roamed Australia during the time of the Dreaming (creation period). Forming landscapes the Rainbow Serpent also engaged with Aboriginal people, teaching kinship systems and the laws of man. As with other Aboriginal language nation's ancestral creation beings, the Rainbow Serpent is the protector of the land, its people, and the source of all life. In other parts of the world the Rainbow Serpent would be known as a Dragon.

Mina

Mina means 'Knowledge' in the Gathang Nations people's language. It is also the language nation of Australia's first Aboriginal surgeon Kelvin Kong, a founding member of the IHC and a RACS Indigenous health advocate and champion.

The 'Mina Advisory Group', is a term to denote the English translation 'Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander knowledge Advisory Group'.

Purpose of Mina

The Mina Advisory Group is responsible for providing advice, guidance and feedback on the development and implementation of key Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander health initiatives, projects and policies.

Indigenous Health Committee

The Mina Advisory Group functions under the oversight of the RACS Indigenous Health Committee. Mina reports to the Indigenous Health Committee (IHC) and supports the IHC with the implementation of the vision and goals of RACS Indigenous Health Position Paper and RACS Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Mina membership & Governance

The Mina Advisory Group membership is comprised of a majority of FRACS and is chaired by a Fellow as determined by Mina members.

The Mina Advisory group can through the discretion of the Mina chair, invite observers from AIDA (Australian Indigenous Doctors Association), other Medical Colleges or medical bodies or any other relevant organisation Mina deems relevant to provide input into Mina decision making process.

Reporting to RACS Council

Indigenous health is a fixed Agenda item on the RACS Council. Advice and recommendations concerning Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander health initiatives, projects, statements and policies are tabled through the IHC.

Administration & Secretariat support

RACS Indigenous Health Team provides administrative and secretariat support to the Indigenous Health Committee, Maori Health Advisory Group and the Mina Group.

Key documents & Policies

- RACS Indigenous Health Position Paper 2020
- RACS Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.
- RACS Indigenous Scholarships & Awards.

Meetings & Engagement with Stakeholders

The expectation of being a member of Mina is the availability to meet a minimum three times a year and be able to contribute to collective decisions (electronically) on a needs basis.

It is anticipated Mina members would engage with internal and external stakeholders in the capacity of a Mina member.

Mina's Terms of Reference

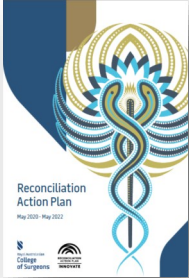
Mina's Terms of Reference (attached) sets out the rules of membership and duration of membership. The IHC has oversight of Mina's Terms of Reference. Any changes to Mina's Terms of Reference is to be approved by the IHC.

Projects & Programs

The level of Mina's input and management of initiatives, programs and projects will vary. Programs and initiatives such as RACS ASC Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander component, Cultural e-learning and the new 10th Competency are matters Mina will be consulted for guidance and feedback.

Below is the list of key projects and programs Mina has significant level of involvement and oversight:

RACS Innovate RAP



As Australasia's surgical college RACS is uniquely placed to champion the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our vision for reconciliation is for no health discrepancies to exist between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous populations of Australia.

Building relationships: It is through collaboration and relationships that joint strategies and partnerships can be formed to achieve significant outcomes in Australia's First Nations peoples' health.

Building respect: Respect through consultation, recognition and celebration contributes to developing respectful, supportive relationships and reflects cultural and community values.

Building opportunities: Social and economic factors are strong determinants of the wellness or otherwise of the individual and their community.

RACS Indigenous Scholarships & Awards (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander)



The RACS Indigenous scholarship program is designed to encourage and support Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori Junior doctors and/ or medical students aspiring to become surgeons and enter the Surgical Education Training (SET) program. A range of awards, prizes and scholarships are offered.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Surgical Pathway Project.



More Indigenous Trainees and Specialists is a desirable goal of professional equity as well as the Close the Gap initiatives in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, social and economic well-being. Developing and implementing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Trainee recruitment and support strategies to increase the number of First Australian surgeons by targeting relevant stakeholders, recent graduates and medical students is the aim of the project.

Ear health For Life Consortium.



The Ear Health For Life network is supported by RACS and is committed to a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Hearing Health Taskforce that can provide evidence-based advice to Government about hearing health.

Partnerships & Networks

Fostering and developing relationships, partnerships and networks with stakeholders is a significant component of Mina's activities. Existing and emerging partnerships include:

- **Australian Indigenous Doctors Association.**
- **Ear health For Life Consortium.**
- **Specialty Boards.**
- **Rural & Global Health.**