

29.03.22

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Health Economics and Research Division
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RE: *Health Insurance Legislation Amendment (Transparent Patient Outcomes) Bill 2021*

Dear First Assistant Secretary,

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to this private member's bill by Senator Stirling Griff in relation to legislative amendments of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* in relation to 'Transparent Patient Outcomes'. While RACS supports in principle the need for transparency when examining data and surgical procedures, RACS cannot support this Bill as it stands due to other factors which influence the qualitative measure of surgical health registries in Australia.

RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. RACS supports the ongoing development, maintenance of expertise and lifelong learning that accompanies the surgical practice of more than 8,000 surgeons and 1,300 surgical trainees and Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMGs).

As discussed at a meeting between our Chair of the Health Policy and Advocacy Committee (HPAC), Policy and Advocacy Team, and yourself the First Assistant Secretary of the Health Economics and Research Division at the Australian Department of Health on 23 February 2022, RACS is concerned with the introduction of this Bill. Problems which exist to name just a few are; the funding of registries, the lack of risk adjustments, public vs private data, surgical ethics applications with differing state jurisdictions, rural outcomes, and complex procedures. There is reason to believe that if passed, the proposed legislative amendments will have a serious impact on our fellowship and the patients they serve in all regions of Australia.

RACS has consulted with our fellowship within our governance structure including all of our state and territory committees, the Research, Audit & Academic Surgery (RAAS) Division, the Rural Surgery Section (RSS), and the HPAC. We have also reached out to all of our nine Australian and binational surgical specialty societies and associations, and thank them for providing their President's joint signatures in support of our submission.



We present to you our submission written in the format requested by the Australian Department of Health, and we look forward to participating in any possible future meetings and/or hearings.

Sincerely,

Dr Sally Langley
President, RACS

Professor Mark Frydenberg
Chair, Health Policy & Advocacy Committee

Co-signed by:



Dr Guy Henry
President, Australian and New Zealand Association of Paediatric Surgeons



Dr Jayme Bennetts
President, Australian and New Zealand Society of Cardiac Thoracic Society



Dr Peter Subramanian
President, Australian and New Zealand Society for Vascular Surgery

Dr Annette Holian
President, Australian Orthopaedic Association



Professor Suren Krishnan
President Australian Society of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery



Dr Dan Kennedy
President, Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons



Dr Sally Butchers
President, General Surgeons Australia



Dr Rodney Allen
President, Neurosurgical Society of Australasia



UROLOGICAL SOCIETY
OF AUSTRALIA
AND NEW ZEALAND

Associate Professor Prem Rashid
President, Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand