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| <b>Division:</b>   | <b>Operations</b>                                                      | <b>Ref. No.</b> | <b>EXA-RGH-013</b> |
| <b>Department:</b> | <b>RACS Global Health</b>                                              |                 |                    |
| <b>Title:</b>      | <b>RACS Global Health Specialty Coordinator<br/>Terms of Reference</b> |                 |                    |

## 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Volunteer Specialty Coordinators under the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons' (RACS) Global Health programs (formerly called the College's International Development Program) are responsible for the technical quality control of international activities delivered within his or her designated specialty. This policy details eligibility requirements for appointment and the terms of reference for the role.

## 2. KEYWORDS

Specialty Coordinator, International Projects, RACS Global Health, Volunteer, International Activities, International Development.

## 3. BODY OF POLICY

### 3.1 Context

RACS Global Health undertakes health system strengthening and health workforce capacity building programs across the Asia-Pacific region. Program countries include: the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Timor Leste, Indonesia and Myanmar. The deployment of Visiting Medical Teams (VMTs) to provide direct medical and surgical support, training and mentoring represents a key program delivery mechanism. Programs are funded through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and other private and corporate donors.

RACS Specialty Coordinators play a critical role in supporting the Global Health program by verifying professional credentials and assessing the technical capacity of volunteer team members prior to their work on RACS' Global Health program. This ensures that RACS deploys the most skilled and professional teams to undertake surgical procedures and other capacity building activities overseas, on behalf of RACS.

Specialty Coordinators also assist with the assessment of requests for support from in-country medical teams and partners and liaise with in-country, honorary Clinical Leads to ensure that RACS Global Health Program is focussed on priority needs of countries and that RACS' standards for quality, effectiveness and professionalism are adhered to.

### 3.2 Selection of Specialty Coordinators

A Specialty Coordinator should:

- be a qualified professional and be registered with the relevant medical authority to practice the speciality in Australia or New Zealand
- demonstrate commitment to assisting RACS program countries to strengthen their health systems, develop their health workforce and meet the health needs of the population
- have expertise in international aid and development work
- have experience of working as a visiting surgical or medical specialist in the Asia/Pacific region
- have a sound understanding of the health conditions, facilities and treatment options for medical conditions encountered in resource poor environments

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Through this experience, it is expected that the individual will have established strong relationships and a network with national doctors and other specialists.

### 3.3 Appointment of Specialty Coordinators

One Specialty Coordinator will be appointed for each clinical specialty area associated with RACS Global Health programs. Specialist Societies and/or relevant Colleges/Organisations will be invited to promote a call for Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for the relevant Specialty Coordinator position through their communication channels. They may also assist by identifying suitable candidates and nominating them to RACS Global Health (up to a maximum of three). Nominated candidates along with other candidates submitting an EOI will be reviewed by the RACS Global Health Steering Group. This review process will result in the appointment of a successful candidate. Appointments will be reviewed by the RACS Global Health Steering Group every 3 years.

### 3.4 Status of Specialty Coordinators Position

The Specialty Coordinator position is a pro bono position.

### 3.5 Role of a Specialty Coordinator

The Specialty Coordinator oversees the appropriateness of the services and training provided within that specialty and ensures that it meets local needs. The Specialty Coordinator may be consulted by the program management team for advice and input in forward planning, as required.

### 3.6 Responsibilities Include:

#### 3.5.1 General support:

Participating in RACS Global Health management meetings and providing input into planning processes and providing advice, as required.

#### 3.5.2 Personnel capacity assessment:

- Assessing the suitability of volunteer medical personnel:
  - conducting interviews, assessing technical capabilities and experience of working in resource poor contexts.
  - checking references provided and endorsing those who meet the criteria as outlined in the RACS Global Health Volunteer Selection Policy.
- Assisting in identifying training opportunities in Australia, New Zealand or other appropriate countries for the professional development of medical personnel from RACS Global Health program countries.
- Assisting with the development of on-line training and participating as a panel member on webinars where topics for training and/or discussion relate to Coordinator's speciality.

#### 3.5.3 Evaluating program country needs and priorities through:

- Understanding the health system strengthening, health workforce development and surgical support needs of the country or countries where the Global Health program is being implemented.

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3.5.4 Ensuring program effectiveness and duty of care obligations met, by:

- Providing professional support to VMTs by making contact with new teams before and after their first visit to provide clinical briefings and debriefings and contacting experienced teams after visits as required.
- Reviewing the complexity and associated risks of proposed medical procedures associated with the formal requests for support received from in-country medical teams. This review should take into account the recipient country's level of development and capacity for follow up and post-operative patient care, prior to a request for support being approved by RACS.
- Reviewing the quality, safety and effectiveness of surgical support provided by VMTs through an assessment of data provided in VMT end of trip reports. This review includes investigation of adverse medical events among patients of VMTs
- Assessing recommendations of VMTs, in collaboration with the Global Health team, to support future program planning, design and implementation.
- Reporting to the Global Health Steering Group on significant outcomes resulting from provision of clinical services and training delivered by VMTs.
- Endorsing the purchase and/or upgrade of equipment for the specialty as required.

3.5.5 Advocacy and Leadership

Engaging with relevant colleges, specialty societies and other professional bodies and health focused organisations to advocate for accessible, safe and affordable surgical and anaesthetic care. This might also involve co-authoring papers, articles and presentations.

#### 4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- RACS Global Health Volunteer Selection procedures
- RACS Global Health Volunteer Agreement

**Approver:** International Engagement Committee

**Authoriser:** Council

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