



LET'S OPERATE WITH / RESPECT

Rural Surgery Section Newsletter January 2019

Chair's Message

Welcome to the new year and to our new Section members. I hope you all managed to have some time off.

In November, the Rural Surgery Section Committee held its annual [face-to-face meeting](#) in Sydney coinciding with the NSW Surgeons' Month.

In this newsletter you can also read news of the [Section election](#) scheduled for February, our recent membership to the [National Rural Health Alliance](#) and an update on the [National Rural Health Commissioner](#). [Applications for scholarships and grant funding opportunities](#) are open – don't forget to apply.

I take this opportunity to thank all the Committee members and regional representatives for the great work they have been doing across Australia and New Zealand representing rural surgeons' interests and ensuring their concerns are heard.

As we commence this new year, the advocacy and administration of the Rural Surgery Section will

be supported by the Policy and Standards team. Based in the NSW office, the team is made up of Chesney O'Donnell, [Elaine Tieu](#) and [Cathy Phillips](#). Please feel free to contact them for any assistance via rural@surgeons.org

Dr Sally Butchers
Chair, Rural Surgery Section

NEWS

[RURAL SURGERY SECTION ELECTIONS](#)

The current three year term of the Rural Surgery Section Committee will end in May 2019. A call for nominations will be issued to all voting members of the Section on 1 February 2019.

[ANNUAL FACE-TO-FACE MEETING OF THE RSS COMMITTEE 17 NOVEMBER](#)

Joining the committee at the meeting were Mr Ken Loi (Chair, NSW Committee) and Allan Chapman (NSW State Manager). Rotating our face-to-face meetings is an important way for us to meet with local Fellows and to stay in touch with the issues of interest and concern to them. Ken Loi presented on current issues in New South Wales, and raised awareness of the inadequate access to public bariatric surgery in regional and rural centres. Allan Chapman gave an overview of the advocacy work led by the individual Australian state and territory and New Zealand offices.

Highlights of the meeting included:

- Strengthening linkages with RACS Training Boards and speciality societies and associations for the establishment of a surgical generalist pathway.
- Discussing mechanisms to recruit and retain the right candidates for rural surgery. These included performance assessment tools and log books for consideration for accredited rural positions.
- Awarding additional merit points for the completion of rural unaccredited posts for applications to SET programs.
- Developing opportunities for surgical cross-specialty training to meet the rural community health needs. Surgical combinations in general, orthopaedic, ENT, paediatrics, vascular, neurosurgery,

plastics and breast and obstetrics are well-sought after.

- Identifying strategies to stimulate STP funding in rural and regional centres.
- Promoting the lifestyle benefits, technological innovations and unique skillset of rural surgery to attract prospective trainees.
- Proposing to establish an inaugural Rural Surgery essay competition for junior medical officers and medical students for the chance to win registration to the Provincial Surgeons of Australia Annual Scientific Conference.
- RACS position paper on Safe Working Hours is undergoing final revision.



RSS Committee face-to-face meeting in Sydney, 2018

NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH ALLIANCE

The RACS Rural Surgery Section is now a member body of the [National Rural Health Alliance](#), which includes a seat on its Council. The diverse representation of the Alliance includes general practice, allied health professionals and other specialist medical colleges provides a comprehensive perspective of rural and remote health interests. Membership with the Alliance also presents opportunity for greater access to

the Minister. RACS will be using this forum to promote surgical generalism within the rural health community.

NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH COMMISSIONER AND RURAL GENERALIST PATHWAY TASKFORCE

The National Rural Health Commissioner was appointed over a year ago, and has since established a National Rural Generalist Pathway Taskforce. The Taskforce has advised on establishing a rural generalist pathway. It seeks to integrate rural training for general practice, emergency and advanced additional skills (such as in surgery, anaesthesia, and obstetrics) into a single training program. The Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine and Royal Australian College of General Practitioners have agreed to collaborate in development of the rural generalist program. The Section will be keeping abreast of further developments.

GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

RACS RURAL SURGERY FELLOWSHIP FOR PROVINCIAL SURGEONS

Applications close Monday 18 February 2019

Three fellowship grants are available each valued up to \$10,000 and are to be used for activities that advance surgical skills and rural practice. Fellows practising in non-metropolitan Australia and New Zealand are eligible to apply. For further information on the fellowship and how to apply please click [here](#).

RACS SURGICAL SKILLS COURSE GRANT FOR RURAL JUNIOR DOCTORS

Applications close Monday 18 February 2019

The Surgical Skills Course Grant is a new bursary established by RACS to promote and support the development of rural surgery as a career path. It is designed to support rural based junior doctors interested in rural practice, undertake a surgical skills course in a rural or regional area. The grant may be used toward travel, accommodation or course fees. For further information on the grant and how to apply please click [here](#).

SUPPORT FOR RURAL SPECIALISTS AUSTRALIA (SRSA) - FUNDING ROUND 4

Applications close 31 March 2019

SRSA is an Australian Government funded initiative to provide rural specialists with access to professional support and training opportunities.

Funding conditions:

- Applicants to have been living and working in a rural area (MM2 to MM7) for at least 12 months
- Up to \$2,000 per training day, up to 5 days (i.e. \$10,000)
- CPD activity must be completed between 1 June 2019 to 30 June 2020
- Practical skills workshops and courses will be prioritised over Annual Scientific Meetings.
- All CPD activities must be completed within Australia.
- Grant funds will be issued upon completion of the approved CPD activity.

For more information and application details click [here](#).

SAVE THE DATES - UPCOMING CONFERENCES & EVENTS

RACS 88th Annual Scientific Congress (ASC) 2019, **Monday 6 – Friday 10 May 2019**, Centara Grand & Bangkok Convention Centre, Bangkok

RSS Annual Business Meeting, **Tuesday 7 May 2019**, 5:30 pm, ASC Bangkok

RACS Queensland Annual Scientific Meeting, **Friday 12 – Sunday 14 July 2019**, Sheraton Grand Mirage, Gold Coast

RACS New Zealand Annual Scientific Meeting, **Thursday 15 – Friday 16 August 2019**, Te Papa, Wellington

RACS SA, NT & WA Annual Scientific Meeting, **Thursday 5 – Saturday 7 September 2019**, Port Lincoln Hotel, Port Lincoln, South Australia

RACS ACT Annual Scientific Meeting, **Friday 1 November 2019**, Location TBC

Provisional Surgeons of Australia (PSA) Scientific Meeting 2019 (Held in conjunction with the 2019 Rural ANZCA SIG), **Saturday 2 – Monday 4 November 2019**, Mercure Ballarat, Victoria

RACS Tasmanian Annual Scientific Meeting, **Friday 8 – Saturday 9 November 2019**, Peppers Silo Resort, Launceston



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