



LET'S OPERATE WITH RESPECT



MEDIA RELEASE

RACS & Barwon Health sign Respect Agreement

Tuesday 2 May 2017

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at building respect and improving patient safety in surgery has been signed between the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) and Barwon Health in Geelong.

Barwon Health is a leading Australian provider in the health sector and has a shared interest in collaborating with RACS to address the issues of discrimination, bullying, and sexual harassment (DBSH).

The MoU is a collaboration formed under the RACS 2015 Action Plan: *Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety* that commits both organisations to collaborate on the development of programs and processes to deal with these issues across the workplace, in surgery and in the health sector, generally.

The MoU is underpinned by both groups' shared values of respect and compassion.

This agreement outlines a shared commitment to effective collaboration and information sharing between the parties to facilitate quality specialist medical training in a safe environment, and one that is free from DBSH. Such an environment contributes to high standards of care, and timely access to care for consumers.

RACS and Barwon Health also commit to work together to ensure that surgical supervisors have the necessary skills and attributes and are supported to provide training, assessment, feedback and support to Trainees and IMGs free of discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment.

The MOU provides the framework for a shared understanding of the relationship between the parties, which enables specialist medical training at Barwon Health, and responds to the need for a clear and mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the parties.

RACS President Phil Truskett said both groups would work cooperatively together on these issues, and exchange information and take appropriate action wherever possible.

"Our role is to determine and maintain standards for the respective disciplines and provide national oversight and consistency for the training and education of medical specialists in those disciplines.

"RACS sets professional standards, accredits training settings and coordinates and supports the education and training of Trainees, IMGs and Fellows," Mr Truskett said.

Barwon Health Chair of the Board Dr John Stekelenberg said that the agreement would strengthen initiatives to improve patient safety and enrich overall workplace culture.

"Our role is to provide accredited training places and employ medical specialist Trainees and Supervisors.



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“Barwon Health will also provide overall support to specialist Trainees, and facilitate integration between training settings to ensure consistent regional health service delivery and quality learning experiences,” Dr Stekelenberg said.

In May 2016, RACS launched Let’s Operate with Respect – a campaign to help deal effectively with DBSH in surgery. Further information can be found on a dedicated new section on the RACS website called About Respect.

About RACS

RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia and New Zealand. The College is a not-for-profit organisation that represents more than 7,000 surgeons and 1,300 surgical trainees and International Medical Graduates. RACS also supports healthcare and surgical education in the Asia-Pacific region and is a substantial funder of surgical research. There are nine surgical specialties in Australasia being: Cardiothoracic surgery, General surgery, Neurosurgery, Orthopaedic surgery, Otolaryngology Head-and-Neck surgery, Paediatric surgery, Plastic and Reconstructive surgery, Urology and Vascular surgery. www.surgeons.org

About Barwon Health

Barwon Health is an Australian health care provider with services ranging from hospital, rehabilitation, elderly care, community health centres and mental health services. Founded in 1998, Barwon Health is among the largest comprehensive regional health services in Australia and also one of the country’s largest regional employers. Its facilities include University Hospital, Geelong, the McKellar Centre, and five community service centres in Victoria, located in Corio, Belmont, Newcomb, Torquay, and Anglesea. <https://www.barwonhealth.org.au>

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