



LET'S OPERATE WITH RESPECT



Ballarat Health Services

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### RACS & Ballarat Health Services sign Respect Agreement

**Wednesday 9 August 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 Ballarat Health Services.

Ballarat Health Services 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 Ballarat Health Services 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.

RACS President John Batten 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 Batten said.

Ballarat Health Services Chief Executive Officer Mr Dale Fraser said that the agreement would strengthen initiatives to improve patient safety and enrich overall workplace culture.

"The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons' program, "Operating with Respect" aligns with the broader BHS Together program, and will be used to support surgeons and trainees on increasing awareness of clinicians in their role to take a stand against unacceptable behaviour, to create avenues for better reporting and to introduce a graduated scale of interventions where discrimination, bullying or sexual harassment occurs.



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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](http://www.surgeons.org)**

### **About Ballarat Health Services**

Ballarat Health Services has been providing quality care for the Ballarat and Grampians region for more than 160 years. It works to improve the health and wellbeing of patients, their families, and the community. Ballarat Health Services is a total health care provider, which means it cares for patients and the community with a comprehensive range of general and specialist care, across every key medical and healthcare discipline.

**[www.bhs.org.au](http://www.bhs.org.au)**

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