

Media release

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Bold, brave reform needed for a failing health system

Reforms to the health system in Aotearoa New Zealand, announced by the Government yesterday are bold and brave, and are acutally what are required to address a failing health system, says Maxine Ronald, Ngati Wai, Ngati Hine, a Northland-based general surgeon, and Chair of the Royal of Australasian College's (RACS) Indigenous Health Committee.

“The current disparities in access to care in our country depending on which area you reside in, are indefensible.

The introduction of a Māori Health Authority (MHA) is welcomed but its success will depend on being able to truly practise mana motuhake and tino rangatiratanga both within Health NZ and at a community and whanau level.”

Dr Ronald says the RACS' Indigenous Health Committee and Māori Health Advisory Group will advocate for timely access and equitable surgical services for Māori. “For the new system to work well, local iwi and hapu in partnership with the MHA will need to inform the way in which these services are provided to ensure the best outcomes for Māori.

“Despite the fact that there are many Māori with significant expertise and experience working in the current health system, they have been unable to achieve equitable outcomes for Māori patients because they are still accountable to a system which is not designed in true partnership with tangata whenua.

“Hopefully the MHA offers a way forward for partnership based on Tiriti o Waitangi principles which will see Māori achieve health equity.”

RACS' Indigenous Health Committee guides the ongoing review and development of RACS' Indigenous health portfolio, to ensure that it continues to meet RACS' aim to improve the health of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islanders and Māori. The Indigenous Health Committee comprises Māori and Aboriginal Fellows and Trainees and may include non-Indigenous Fellows and Trainees.

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[More information about the reforms](#)

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About the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (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 7000 surgeons and 1300 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