

Costs of excellence the focus at surgical meeting

1 November 2019

ACT surgeons will meet at the National Museum of Australia for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons' (RACS) Annual Surgical Meeting, where they will discuss 'The Cost of Excellence.'

Event co-convenor Dr Ailene Fitzgerald said that the conference provided an excellent opportunity for local surgeons and those from across Australia to discuss the many challenges associated with determining the true costs of excellence in health care.

"We have a great line-up of distinguished local and guest speakers sharing their experiences, visions and considered thoughts on the financial and economic considerations, as well as a more human perspective on the often significant personal costs suffered in the pursuit of excellence," Dr Fitzgerald said.

"We live in a time where heavy scrutiny is placed on the value of individual surgical procedures in an attempt to rationalise the money spent on our health system. At the same time, technological advancement and developments in surgical practice are continuous, and surgeons are regularly challenged to justify both the costs of adopting new technologies as well as the validity of maintaining existing practices.

"We will be exploring how we achieve the right balance to optimise both patient care of a community and well-being of all healthcare providers within our resource limitations?"

"Another aspect we will be looking at is whether 'Centres of Excellence' are actually providing the excellence in care that they promise. How is this measured and are processes clearly linked with outcomes, and access a problem for more marginalised groups or remote communities."

Highlights of the conference include;

- The CEO of the Independent Hospital Pricing Authority, Mr James Downie who will be presenting on 'Excellent outcomes save money.'
- Professor Russel Gruen, RACS surgeon and ANU Dean College of Health and Medicine, who will be analysing whether there really is a cost to excellence.
- Associate Professor Michael Talbot who will provide a case study on the lessons learnt from establishing a centre for excellence in bariatric surgery

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