23 April 2020

Dear Colleagues

This letter is from the NZAPS Council to Members regarding resumption of elective surgeries during the New Zealand Government Level 3 COVID response.

The Ministry of Health has released guidelines regarding the resumption of elective surgery in New Zealand for Level 3 which can be found here. It states:

- Some planned care, including elective surgery and radiology, will be provided
- Some non-urgent services or treatment may be deferred.

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons has not yet put out a New Zealand specific statement but in Australia a joint statement between the Australian Government and RACS noted the following types of surgery could proceed with caution:

- Procedures representing low risk, high value care as determined by specialist societies
- Selection of patients who are at low risk of post-operative deterioration
- Children whose procedures have exceeded clinical wait times.

Private hospitals have asked that specialty societies provide guidance for elective surgery during the Level 3 restrictions in New Zealand.

The NZAPS Council advice to members is as follows:

During Level 3 COVID response, the NZAPS Council supports the cautious re-starting of elective Plastic and Reconstructive procedures for patients who are at low risk of complications and high benefit of improvement in quality of life.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Wheeler, President
NZ Association of Plastic Surgeons