

Division:	Fellowship Engagement	Ref. No.	REG-3010
Department:	Fellowship Services		
Title:	Retired and Deceased Fellows		

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy describes the key functions and management of membership information related to retired and deceased Fellows of the RACS.

It is important that the College maintains accurate membership records for all Fellows. Each Fellow holds a unique membership status that identifies their current relationship with the RACS from one of the following options: active, inactive, retired or deceased.

Fellows (or their family members, in the case of death) are encouraged to contact RACS regarding changes to their membership status, as it has implications for College subscriptions, participation in the College's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program and information provided to general enquiries from members of the public and external organisations.

2. KEYWORDS

Retirement, death, Fellow status, member benefits, In memoriam

3. BODY OF POLICY

3.1. Retired Fellows

3.1.1. Definition of Retirement

A "retired" Fellow is no longer practising as a medical practitioner and is not registered as a medical practitioner by their country's medical regulator or is categorised as 'non-practising'. They do not have a CPD requirement as determined by the medical regulator in their country of residence. Fellows who meet this definition no longer have a requirement in the College's CPD Program and are no longer required to pay an annual membership subscription.

3.1.2. Changing membership status from active to retired

To change a Fellows' membership status from active to retired, the RACS definition of retirement must be confirmed in writing.

The Fellowship Officer is responsible for maintaining membership information for all Fellows and will change a Fellows' membership status from active to retired (and record the effective date) once letter confirmation received.

In the circumstance where the RACS retirement definition is not met, or there are individual circumstances to be considered, sign-off for the retirement is required from the relevant departments. Approval is granted by the EGM, Fellowship and Standards to ensure the appropriate departments are informed and the individual Fellow's circumstances are considered.

Following the status change, the Manager, Fellowship Services, issues retired Fellows with a letter confirming their retirement, the effective date and encourages Fellows to continue to contribute to the RACS activities. The Finance Department co-ordinates a subscription reversal and ensures a credit note accompanies the correspondence (if applicable).

3.1.3. Informing the College of retirement

Retired Fellows can advise of their change in status by:

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Contacting the Fellowship Officer to request a Confirmation of Retirement Form to complete and return.

Fellows are encouraged to contact the Fellowship Officer with any questions regarding retirement and to confirm that their retirement meets the RACS definition of retirement outlined in section 3.1.1.

3.1.4. Membership benefits

Following retirement, many of the rights and benefits as a Fellow remain unchanged. Retired Fellows will continue to be eligible to:

- Receive the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Surgery, Surgical News and other relevant publications and communication issued to the Fellowship
- Access RACS resources including the Library and the Member Benefits Program
- Attend the College's Annual General Meeting, Annual Scientific Congress and regional events and activities
- Vote in general and specialty elections for membership appointments to the RACS Board of Council
- Use the post nominals FRACS

Retired Fellows are no longer eligible to appear on the Find a Surgeon directory available on the RACS website as this is limited to active Fellows of the College.

3.1.5. RACS subscriptions

Retired Fellows are no longer required to pay an annual membership subscription. Fellows must be retired for more than six months of a subscription period in order to be eligible for a refund. Applications for refunds for prior years cannot be processed. Retired Fellows are encouraged to discuss options with the Finance Department.

3.1.6. Release of information on retirement status

A Fellow's retirement status will be communicated to any reasonable enquiry from the general public and external organisations including hospitals, medical boards/councils, specialty associations and societies and other relevant authorities. Refer to the College's **Privacy Policy** for further information.

3.2. Returning to active practice following retirement

3.2.1. Resuming active practice has implications for medical registration, credentialing, College subscriptions and participation in a RACS approved Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program. If a surgeon wishes to return to active practice s/he must demonstrate that they have met the recency of practice requirements. Fellows who have identified themselves or been identified by the medical regulator as requiring re-skilling or retraining may be subject to any requirements deemed necessary by the Executive Director of Surgical Affairs (EDSA).

Retired Fellows who wish to recommence active practice (including medico legal work, surgical assisting, teaching or general medical practice) are

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required to inform the College of this change and apply in writing to the EDSA. The EDSA will review the application and discuss any re-skilling or supervision requirements based on the Fellow's proposed work.

RACS offers a formal Re-skilling and Re-entry Program for Fellows who have had an extended period of absence from clinical practice. For further details on recency of practice requirements and procedures see the Re-Skilling and Re-Entry Policy.

3.2.2. CPD requirements for returning to active status following retirement

If a surgeon wishes to return to active practice s/he must demonstrate participation in CPD activities that are at least equivalent to those required of RACS Fellows.

Such activities may include participation in a CPD Program of another Medical College or organisation, or completion of a personal CPD learning plan. Fulfilment of either requirement must have occurred for a minimum of one year immediately prior to application for return to active Fellow status.

If the applicant has participated in an equivalent program with another Medical College or organisation that is deemed to be equivalent to that of RACS, the individual must provide evidence of the applicant's satisfactory compliance with that program to the Professional Standards Department.

If the applicant has not participated in a recognised CPD Program, s/he will be required to complete their CPD Online or return a CPD transcript for the relevant year. S/he will be required to provide evidence of participation in all of the activities claimed.

3.2.3. Financial obligations to be met in returning to active practice

The Finance Department will review the RACS subscription amount required to be paid and eligibility for any discounts. Any outstanding subscription fee(s) must be paid prior to reinstatement as an active Fellow.

3.3. Deceased Fellows

3.3.1. Informing the College of a Fellow's death

Family members and colleagues are encouraged to inform RACS regarding the death of a Fellow.

3.3.2. Changing membership status to deceased

The Fellowship Officer is responsible for maintaining membership information for all Fellows and will change a Fellows' membership status from active or retired to deceased once notification has been received and the Fellow has been appropriately identified. The Fellowship Officer must identify the person who confirmed the death and ensure this is confirmed in writing from a family member, via a public notice, or message from a colleague for verification purposes.

3.3.3. In memoriam

The Fellowship Officer notifies the President's Office, the Communications and Advocacy Department and the Finance Department (Accounts Project and Administration and Administrative Officer Accounts Receivable) of a Fellow's death.

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The death is noted in the next edition of Surgical News. An obituary when available is noted at the next meeting of the Board of Council or Board of Council Executive, added to the In memoriam section of the College website by the Communications and Advocacy Department and a letter of condolence is issued by the College President to the Fellow's spouse/ family.

The Finance Department will write-off any outstanding RACS fees upon notification of death and contact the Fellows' family if any refunds are available. If eligible for a refund, the family will be asked to consider donating the funds to the Foundation for Surgery.

3.3.4. College correspondence

Fellows holding a deceased status will no longer receive correspondence from RACS and will automatically be removed from mailing lists for journals and publications and regular email communications. Deceased Fellows will also be automatically removed from the Find a Surgeon directory on the RACS website, as this is limited to active Fellows of the College.

3.3.5. Release of information on deceased status

A Fellow's deceased status will be communicated to any reasonable enquiry from the general public and external organisations including hospitals, medical boards/ councils, specialty associations and societies and other relevant authorities. Refer to the College's Privacy Policy for further information.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Privacy Policy

Re-skilling and Re-entry Program Guidelines.

Fellowship - Change of Status Procedure

Subscriptions Policy

Confirmation of Retirement Form

Approver Professional Development and Standards Board
Authoriser Council

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