

<b>Division:</b>	<b>ALL DIVISIONS</b>	<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>REL-RMT-002</b>
<b>Department:</b>	<b>ALL DEPARTMENTS</b>		
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Provision of Facilities and Support for Parents of Infants attending RACS Activities</b>		

## 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) recognises the challenges surgical Trainees, Fellows and International Medical Graduates (IMGs) face in balancing the needs of their young children and a professional career.

Surgeons and surgical Trainees who are parents of young children may be restricted in their ability to attend scientific meetings due to the age of their child and the child-minding arrangements. Women in the surgical training program are usually in their child-bearing years and are often returning to training whilst their infant is still breastfeeding.

RACS recognises a mother's need to ensure that work and breastfeeding can be combined comfortably and practically to meet the needs of the baby, mother and workplace.

As a member based organisation with responsibility for surgical education and training, RACS commits to providing breastfeeding friendly facilities for Fellows, Trainees, International Medical Graduates and visitors.

RACS wishes to support women in their desire to maintain breastfeeding for as long as mother and baby desire, particularly as there are significant health benefits to the infant from breastfeeding.

This policy outlines the facilities and support RACS may offer at its primary scientific meetings and other major activities to meet the needs of mothers who are feeding an infant or expressing breastmilk, and to parents of pre-school age children.

For the purpose of this policy, breastfeeding means breastfeeding an infant or expressing breastmilk.

## 2. KEYWORDS

Breastfeeding, expressing, feeding, infant, mother, child.

## 3. BODY OF POLICY

### 3.1. Objectives

- a) Encourage behaviour and care that is in the best interests of the infant
- b) Assist Fellows, Trainees and IMGs to integrate their work and family commitments
- c) Promote diversity in the surgical profession
- d) Comply with relevant legislation

### 3.2. Provision of Facilities

#### 3.2.1. Annual Scientific Congress (ASC)

RACS will provide a breastfeeding/expressing room at its Annual Scientific Congress (ASC). This room will be suitable for feeding an infant, expressing breastmilk, and changing of nappies. It is not intended as a child care room.

Subject to the location of the ASC size and the conference facilities, RACS will make every endeavour to provide onsite child care for infants and pre-school children. RACS will engage suitably qualified and licensed personnel to provide this care. The cost of the child care may be added on to the registration fees of the attendee. Where child care cannot be provided, RACS will provide information on local child care options.

Approved By:	Director, Relationships & Advocacy	Original Issue:	January 2017
Document Owner:	Director, Relationships & Advocacy	Version:	1
		Approval Date:	Jan 2017
		Review Date:	Jan 2020

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3.2.2. Other RACS events

RACS Fellows, Trainees, IMGs or other participants attending a RACS event not held at a RACS office, should advise the organiser of their requirements to enable RACS to make every reasonable effort to obtain a dedicated breastfeeding/expressing room. RACS will consider logistical and operational requirements in considering these requests but may not always be able to fulfil them.

3.2.3. RACS Offices

RACS has provided suitable facilities throughout its offices for women to express breastmilk or breastfeed their babies . Car parking spaces may be available for carers bringing a baby to the workplace to breastfeed, these should be pre-arranged. Any visitors will need to be signed in via each office’s routine procedures.

Suitable facilities will include:

- A private, hygienic, clean, lockable space
- Electrical power point
- Appropriate seating close to power point
- A table for breast pump equipment
- Hand washing facilities close by
- Hygienic facilities for washing breast pump equipment close by (not a restroom)
- Access to existing refrigerators for storing breastmilk
- Secure facilities for storage of breast pump and other equipment (this varies by region)

Further details on facility locations by office and access to these can be found in the Breastfeeding/Expressing Room Procedures document.

These breastfeeding/expressing rooms may have shared functions depending on the RACS location. A protocol has been established to manage those instances when the room is occupied or in use by others when needed by the breastfeeding employee or visitor. This protocol is available at each office and specifies who has occupancy priority and the alternative facilities available to the parent if for any reason the designated breastfeeding/expressing room is temporarily unavailable.

In the event these rooms are unavailable please speak to the Melbourne Events Manager or the Regional Manager on site an an alternative space will be made available.

**3.3. Support for Mothers**

The Australian Breastfeeding Association has trained volunteer breastfeeding counsellors available on the National Breastfeeding Helpline 24 hours per day for information and support on combining breastfeeding and work. Call 1800 mum 2 mum (1800 686 268) or visit: [www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au) for local group contact details in your area.

In New Zealand, please contact the New Zealand Breastfeeding Alliance or the Ministry of Health.

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**4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

The following procedures are in place to support the implementation of this policy. These include:

- Shared Use Room Protocols
- Breastfeeding/Expressing Room Procedures/Guidelines
- Guidelines for expressing and storing breastmilk when travelling

Under the Sex Discrimination Act, 1984 (Commonwealth) it is against the law to discriminate, directly or indirectly, against an employee who is breastfeeding. The definition of breastfeeding includes expressing milk. It is generally against the law to tell an employee not to breastfeed or express in the workplace. Failure to accommodate employees who are breastfeeding through flexible work arrangements or the provision of appropriate breastfeeding facilities at work may constitute a breach of state legislation and/or the Sex Discrimination Act, 1984 (Commonwealth) and may give rise to complaints to the relevant state body.

Australian State/Territory Legislation:

- Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)
- Industrial Relations Act 1996 — Section 70 (NSW)
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
- NSW Health Policy PD2006\_012 Breastfeeding in NSW: Promotion, protection and support 2006 (NSW)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 (NSW)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (QLD, NT)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (Tas)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA, WA).

Commonwealth:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000
- NHMRC Australian Dietary Guidelines. Commonwealth of Australia 2013:87-96.

Note: State and Commonwealth legislation prohibits direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of sex, breastfeeding status, pregnancy and carer's responsibility.

New Zealand:

- New Zealand Human Rights Commission

**Approver** Council  
**Authoriser** Council

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