

Strategic Plan

2019–2021

Business Plan 2020

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Committed to Indigenous health

Service | Integrity | Respect | Compassion | Collaboration

Introduction from the President

On behalf of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) it is my pleasure to present the business plan for 2020. This plan is founded on the College's vision and aligns with our strategic plan for 2019-2021. Our strategic plan defines our approach in view of this ambition. It is developed on a three-year cycle and reviewed regularly, informing an annual business plan in which we prioritise initiatives. This in turn informs the annual budget process.

Our successes to date have been made possible by positive relationships and the value of collaboration – nurturing our collaborative spirit in partnership with specialty societies and key stakeholders is a focus for us in 2020. We are cognisant that unity strengthens the profession and we will seek to work with our partners across the lifespan of initiatives, from the design stage through to implementation.

This year we have three flagship initiatives as part of our business plan.

1. We will launch two new plans in support of our commitment to Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori health.
2. Our 'One College Transformation' is a comprehensive program, initiated in 2019, that looks at everything we do in a cohesive and strategic manner. Spanning four years, the program encompasses our technology, people and culture, and governance. Our 2020 business plan highlights activities that will deliver better value for our members and in turn our communities, who stand to benefit from a future-focused surgical workforce. We are listening closely to our trainees, Fellows and International Medical Graduates, ensuring we are responsive to surgeons' needs and increasingly able to tailor our offerings to individuals.
3. The next phase of our Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety initiative will build on positive gains made to date, informed by the insights of the recent evaluation. Our 2020 business plan details a range of commitments demonstrating our continued leadership amongst partners to underpin a health system-wide approach to action on discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment in the practice of surgery.

I recommend our strategic plan and business plan to you.

Dr Anthony Sparnon
President



About RACS

RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia and New Zealand. We have a proud history of facilitating the training of new surgeons, ensuring the support and development of existing surgeons and leading advocacy around standards and patient care. Our College represents the collective and national interests of Australian and New Zealand surgeons and the specific needs and opportunities within the eight states and territories of Australia. Importantly, the targeted, localised functions are managed through the Australian states, territories and New Zealand offices.

Mission

The leading advocate for surgical standards, education and professionalism in Australia and New Zealand

Vision

Leading surgical performance, professionalism and improving patient care

Values

Service, respect, integrity, compassion and collaboration

Health sector context

Australia and New Zealand provide some of the best health systems in the world. There are, however, significant challenges facing healthcare. As people live longer and the incidence of non-communicable diseases increases, pressure intensifies and costs rise. Patient and community expectations are changing, shaped by seamless, digital experiences in other sectors. People want to be able to access healthcare in the way that best suits them – and have rapid access to the latest medical advances. There is recognition of the institutionalised inequities within the health system and the need to drive change at the system level. Current trends shaping the delivery of healthcare include:

1. Patient empowerment, education and transparency
2. Wellness and prevention
3. New models of integrated care driven by outcomes-based funding and management, enabled by digital health networks and delivered by a health workforce that has the right capabilities.

A key focus for the sector is to develop innovative, cost-effective ways to deliver patient-centred, technology-enabled healthcare, both within and beyond hospitals. We are in the midst of exponential disruptive change. To ensure Australia and New Zealand remain at the forefront of excellence in healthcare, we must ensure our surgeons are equipped to create the future, rather than simply react to it.

Strategy 2019-2021

Our strategic plan identifies three essential areas of purpose for our College:

- Standards and Professionalism – leading surgical practice through training, education and research
- Enduring Value – creating opportunity for the surgical profession
- Membership – sustaining and supporting Fellows, Trainees and International Medical Graduates throughout their careers

Underpinning these pillars are three key focus areas:

- Indigenous health by better meeting the health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Māori people.
- Collaborating effectively with our partners, including our key partners, the specialty societies
- Through all of our endeavours, supporting the communities we serve

The strategy is graphically represented in the diagram on page 11.

Business plan 2020

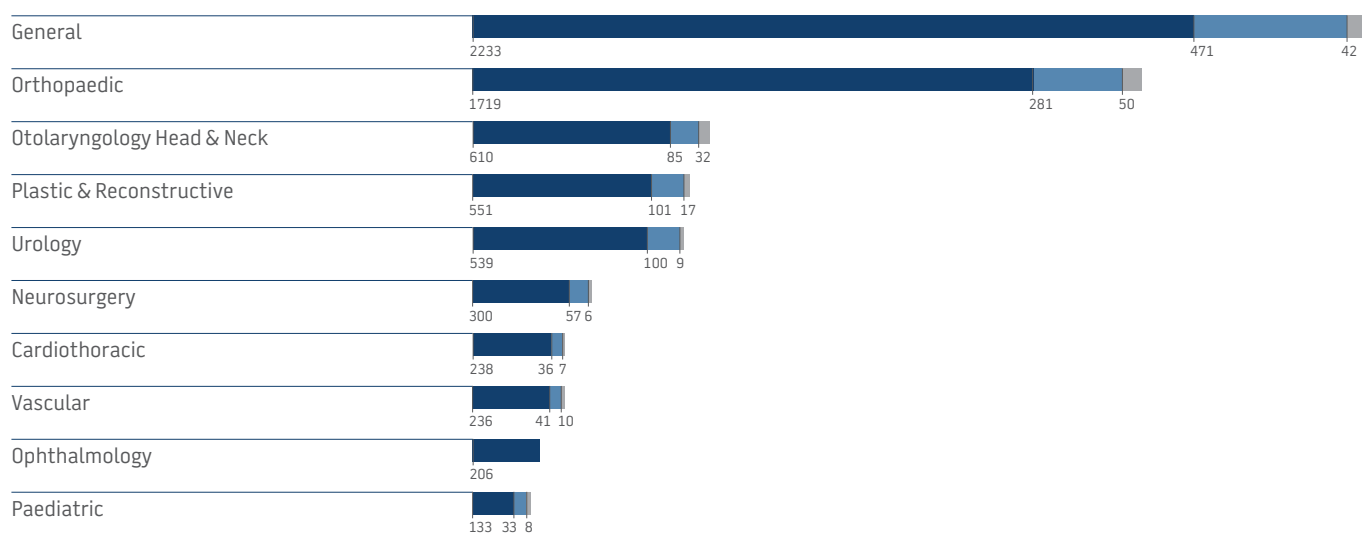
Our business plan profiles key priorities for 2020, by pillar, across portfolios. Greater detail is provided on three flagship priorities. We will measure our success through regular reporting against key performance indicators.



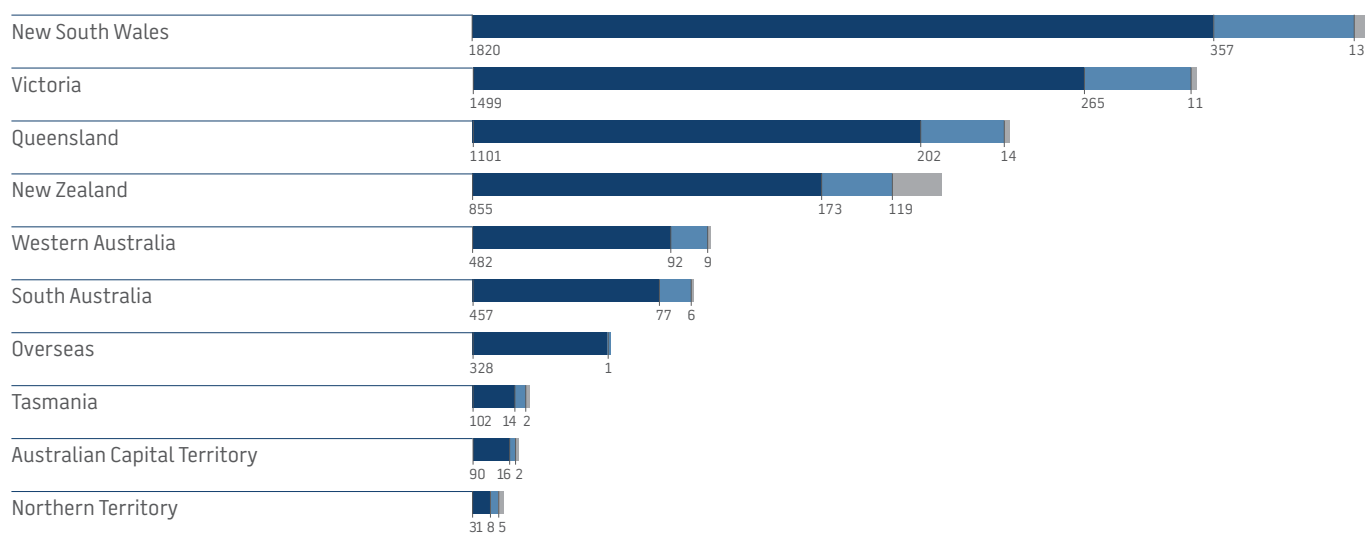
Our surgeons

We are focused on supporting our current and future surgeons with a sustainable, respectful and innovative healthcare environment.

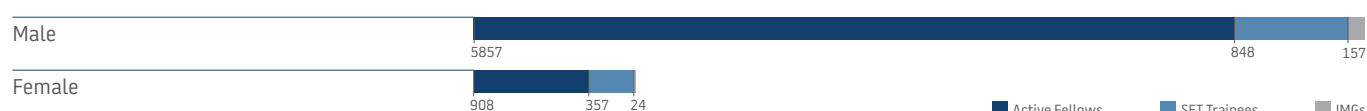
BY SPECIALITY



BY LOCATION



BY GENDER



■ Active Fellows ■ SET Trainees ■ IMGs

As at 31 December 2019

Our staff

The College comprises four portfolios, which work closely with the specialty societies to ensure positive outcomes for the surgical profession:

Education:

- Supports, shapes and directs the development of world-class curricula in conjunction with specialty societies to select, train and sustain surgeons to provide the best patient care
- Supports the delivery of high impact learning outcomes, built on current best practice in, for example, simulation, assessment and evaluative learning cycles
- Works in partnerships with stakeholders, training boards, hospitals and global technology providers, to ensure the highest standard of safe, respectful and comprehensive surgical care through excellence in training and professional development and continuous education

Fellowship Engagement:

- Leads and oversees the maintenance and improvement of surgical standards, including continuing professional development for Fellows and a range of other engagement activities
- Promotes professionalism and standards through communication and advocacy with government and relevant stakeholders

Operations:

- Ensures the efficient management of all internal operations and resources of the College
- Manages the business resources of the organisation including:
 - Governance & Risk (which includes

General Counsel)

- the President's office
- Complaints
- Business Transformation, Technology and Data
- Finance
- Global Health
- Foundation for Surgery
- Conference & Events

People & Culture:

- Oversees the Human Resources functions (including payroll) and leads engagement programs to improve organisational culture and learning and development activities for staff
- Supports leadership and culture change in the surgical workplace amongst Fellows, Trainees and International Medical Graduates through the *Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety* initiative
- Includes the Marketing and Communications team, which focuses on building the RACS brand and internal and external communications
- Oversees the Internal Services team, including reception, facilities, archives and the museum

Surgical expertise

The pro bono contribution of Fellows continues to be the College's most valued asset and resource. Involvement in committees has become one of the key mechanisms for Fellows to participate in the College however this can be made more effective and rewarding. We are actively exploring new ways to broaden member engagement, including facilitating a contribution from a more diverse pool of subject matter experts in standards.



THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE RACS STRATEGY

Mission and Vision

MISSION

The leading advocate for surgical standards, education and professionalism in Australia and New Zealand

VISION

Leading surgical performance, professionalism and improving patient care

Our three pillars

STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONALISM

Leading surgical practice through training, education and research

ENDURING VALUE

Creating opportunity for the surgical profession

MEMBERSHIP

Sustaining and supporting Fellows, Trainees and International Medical Graduates throughout their careers

Indigenous health

Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori

Collaboration

Specialty societies

Community

Improving health outcomes

Values

SERVICE

RESPECT

INTEGRITY

COMPASSION

COLLABORATION

Governance

CONSTITUTION

CHARTER

CODE OF CONDUCT

POLICIES

Principles

Treat others as its Members would wish to be treated

Be open to, and informed by, the views of others

Develop expertise to act in areas of importance

Do no harm and act for the common good

Be transparent, fair and responsive

Preserve and enhance the sustainability of the College and its Members

Standards and professionalism

Leading surgical practice through training, education and research

Surgical education

Innovation in evidence-based training pathways through stronger partnerships will maintain RACS as a world leader in surgical education.

- Strengthen and nurture the working relationships with the Specialty Training Boards, our Trainees' Association and specialty societies, to deliver exceptional governance across all specialties, leading to exemplary training programs and outcomes for all Trainees and International Medical Graduates. Our annual, binational roadshow with specialty societies, now in its third year and spanning Melbourne, Sydney and Wellington, is key to this work. The newly established Specialty Society Chief Executive Officer Forum will also strengthen collaboration. Through these initiatives we will deepen our understanding of our partners' priorities and needs, enabling us to ensure we have effective response mechanisms in place.
- Deliver a strategy to enable a forward-looking education portfolio, equipped to build the training programs of the future. Our growth strategy will include continuing to leverage off our intellectual property to ensure patient safety through the quality assurance and sustainability of the College's educational offer.
- Develop an overarching evaluation and monitoring framework of all training and educational activities, in line with Australian Medical Council (AMC) and Medical Council of New Zealand requirements, ensuring alignment with specialty societies. By measuring success and understanding the underlying mechanisms, we can achieve the desired outcomes.

- Establish an assessment commission to undertake a review of the interrelated selection, workplace assessment and examination processes throughout the trainee journey to ensure that our assessment methodologies remain cutting edge for our developing competency-based curricula.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Strengthen partner relationships
- Deliver education growth strategy
- Develop evaluation and monitoring framework for training and educational activities
- Establish assessment commission
- Develop re-accreditation submission for AMC

Rural health

We will maintain a focus on rural health, identifying opportunities for improved training pathways for rural health and working with rural surgeons to develop support mechanism for rural-based Trainees, Fellows and International Medical Graduates.

PATHWAYS FOR TRAINING IN RURAL AREAS

In partnership with our Surgical Specialty Training Boards, RACS will ensure a future sustainable rural surgical workforce during the Surgical Education and Training (SET) selection process and training program. Applicants for the SET program who have a rural background or have completed pre-SET (prevocational) clinical work in a rural setting will be awarded selection points for their curriculum vitae. All Trainees will have one or more years of continuous positive rural clinical exposure during their training on the SET program. Trainees will develop rural self-efficacy via training in a regional network or performing outreach, depending on their surgical specialty. The development of a Northern Australia surgical training network would help build a local sustainable workforce for the Northern Territory and Northern Queensland.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Establish new selection criteria to enable local rural placements
- Develop training pathways to promote rural generalism

INCREASED AWARENESS OF THE RURAL COMMUNITY NEEDS FOR SURGERY

RACS will be a leader in the provision of rural patient-centred surgical care delivered by all disciplines. To enable this, we will strengthen our relationships with rural and remote affiliated health practitioner organisations and governments, expanding beyond our representation on the National Rural Health Alliance Council and Rural Doctors Association of Australia. We will collaborate with other health practitioner groups and specialist medical colleges to deliver a coordinated patient focused surgical care framework.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Strengthen engagement with stakeholders through formal consultations and written submissions to government

Global health

Review the current operating model and adapt to changing risks, including those associated with working in country. We will determine how to evaluate our impact and, informed by these insights, how best to assist the development of in country capability to improve population health. We will also explore different ways to engage with communities, building on and maintaining the College's strong clinical reputation.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Broader engagement in accordance with RACS Global Engagement Strategy with a diversified funding base across a greater pool of donors

Flagship initiative

Indigenous health

In 2020, our College will launch two new plans in support of our strategic commitment to Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori health in Australia and New Zealand.

The College's Indigenous Health Committee has responsibility to oversee New Zealand and Australian initiatives in support of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori health and will report directly to Council in 2020 for the first time. This change has been implemented to ensure our commitment to Indigenous health is maintained across the College.

Māori health

Te Rautaki Māori (Māori Health Strategy and Action Plan) will be launched in 2020. Te Rautaki Māori builds on the College's inaugural Māori Health Action Plan and will include six kaupapa (priority areas):

1. *Pae Ora* (Healthy futures), the New Zealand Government's vision for Māori health which provides a platform for Māori to be well and healthy in an environment that supports a good quality of life
2. *Mātauranga Māori* (Māori knowledge and capability) provides the foundation for building a capable surgical workforce and increasing the Māori knowledge of RACS staff and governance to make informed decisions on issues relating to Māori
3. *Whakatipu* (Workforce development) focuses on increasing and maintaining the Māori surgical workforce and creating an environment that is safe for Māori

4. *Rangahau Māori* (Research and development) is using kaupapa Māori methodology to undertake research that is beneficial for Māori and increases understanding of te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori
5. *Kaupapa Here* (Stronger policy and development). Policies that are reviewed and or developed will produce better results for Māori and better reflect the needs and aspirations of Māori
6. *Ngā Hononga* (Partnerships) will be developed and maintained to support the progression of Te Rautaki Māori.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health

RACS Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) will be the College's second plan progressing through the second of four stages, Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate, managed by Reconciliation Australia. Reconciliation Australia outlines the purpose of a Reconciliation Action Plan as a strategic document that supports an organisation's business plan and includes practical actions to drive an organisation's contribution to reconciliation.

RACS Innovate RAP will focus on three broad priority areas:

1. Relationships

The College recognises the importance of relationships and collaboration. It is through collaboration and relationships that joint strategies and partnerships can be formed to achieve significant outcomes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

2. Building respect

The College is committed to improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health inequities. The College acknowledges to achieve this outcome it is necessary to acknowledge and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, community and history. Respect through consultation, recognition and celebration contributes to developing respectful, supportive relationships and reflects cultural and community values.

3. Building opportunity

Social and economic factors are strong determinants of the wellness or otherwise of the individual and his or her community. These factors are compounded in Indigenous populations by the multigenerational grief, loss and trauma associated with low self-esteem, colonisation, the Stolen Generation in Australia, many layers of racism, discrimination, and cultural dislocation. The College recognises that 'closing the gap' is imperative if disparities in life expectancy are to be addressed.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Increase numbers of Indigenous doctors in surgical training
- With the update of RACS Surgical Competence and Performance guide, increase opportunities for Fellows to undertake Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori health and cultural competence training.



Enduring value

Creating opportunity for the surgical profession

One College Transformation – Governance, Policy and Procedure

The Governance, Policy and Procedure stream of the One College Transformation will reduce complexity and duplication, enabling increased agility and more effective strategic oversight.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Rationalise our vast committee structure and improve member engagement. This will include reviewing member selection processes for committees and community representation arrangements – both vital to progressing commitments within our Diversity & Inclusion Plan.
- Finalise development of a new policy framework and commence implementation across the College.

One College Transformation – People and Culture

The People and Culture stream of the One College Transformation will create a new positive, forward-looking way of working, ensuring the College remains relevant, efficient and effective.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Through a culture review, develop a framework to harness the potential of Fellow-staff collaboration
- Articulate a clear purpose and vision for the contribution of Fellows on staff to maximise the effectiveness of the model including a strategy for achieving higher levels of diversity that is representative of the membership

- Redefine the suite of staff benefits to achieve a more contemporary workforce model that enhances staff engagement while assisting the College to be an employer of choice

Foundation for Surgery

The Foundation for Surgery will continue to increase its reach and impact, ensuring enduring positive value in the community through building the corpus funds and Foundation supporters.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Increase donor engagement
- Implement new approach and system for scholarships

Membership

Sustaining and supporting Fellows, Trainees and International Medical Graduates throughout their careers

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) review

Since its inception, the College's CPD Program has been at the forefront of best practice within Australia and New Zealand. In recent years the Medical Board of Australia and the Medical Council of New Zealand have been undertaking a review of their respective CPD Standards, consulting broadly with a range of stakeholders including RACS. While the revised standards will continue to afford specialists the flexibility to largely self-regulate their CPD, there will be a greater focus on activities that promote audit, performance review, self-reflection.

RACS has been proactive in responding to changes within the regulatory environment. We have established a working party to review our CPD framework to ensure alignment with the new regulatory standards and to ensure we deliver a flexible, relevant and robust program for our Fellows.

RACS is committed to developing a CPD program and education that support all members. The College will be trialing new and innovative activities over the coming months and we look forward to hearing from the Fellowship about how we can better serve its educational needs into the future.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- A CPD program that is relevant to a surgeon's scope of practice
- Greater recognition of the breadth of activities undertaken by a surgeon
- A bespoke offering of activities, support programs and workshops relevant to all surgeons
- Support for those surgeons having difficulties meeting the standards

- Introduction of new technology to minimise repetitious reporting of CPD activities

Advocacy

The College will continue to advocate by advising and influencing health policy as it applies to surgery and patient care.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Engagement of specialty societies on key initiatives
- Positive impact on health policy decision-making
- Support our Fellows across Australia and New Zealand to contribute their expertise to advocacy priorities

Flagship initiative

One College Transformation

‘We will be One College to serve all members (Fellows, Trainees, International Medical Graduates) and staff.’

The College has established a planned roadmap for the development of improved digital applications for Fellows, Trainees and International Medical Graduates. This program of work has commenced with the re-build of ageing technology infrastructure with the selection of Microsoft as the preferred platform suite of applications and services. This approach was informed by the creation of the following 10 strategic intent statements that are driving College digital experiences.

‘We will actively promote and consistently deliver a positive brand that is globally recognised as contemporary, accessible, innovative and progressive.’

‘We will work effectively across health systems and with our partners to ensure patients have access to safe, timely and sustainable surgical services.’

‘As a member, RACS will understand my life journey with the College and provide me with timely, correct and relevant information and experiences throughout all stages to build on my existing knowledge, skills and attitudes.’

‘We will develop a positive workplace culture by uplifting employee capability and engagement through improved staff selection and development - so that we can deliver against our strategic objectives and improve Member experiences.’

‘As a strategic partner, I will be able to seamlessly integrate with the RACS systems to access the right information at the right time.’

‘As a volunteer, member or employee, I will be provided with the right tools, systems, training, and information and support to carry out the role(s) I am expected to perform and be recognised for my contribution.’

‘We will deliver, and broker valued experiences across a borderless surgical education continuum.’

‘As a member, I will be connected into a valuable network of my peers that is fostered by RACS.’

‘We will ensure operational efficiency, innovation, sustainability and growth in our delivery of service excellence.’

‘We will reduce operational dependence on members fees by developing additional sustainable revenue streams that are not sourced from Fellows or Trainees.’

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- 2020 is a foundation year with heavy investment in replacing ageing infrastructure, network upgrades and website platform changes
- Recognition by Microsoft as a preferred site for development of its education platform and application services

Flagship initiative

Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety

In 2015, we established an Expert Advisory Group (EAG) to investigate the extent of discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment within the surgical profession. EAG research revealed widespread discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment in the practice of surgery. We responded to these issues by developing an action plan, Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety, which outlines how our College intends to counter and drive out unacceptable behaviours from surgical practice and surgical training.

The Phase 1 Evaluation of our implementation of the action plan found the College is now a leading institution that has acknowledged the problems of discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment and made a serious commitment to addressing them.

The independent evaluation found ‘remarkably high’ levels of support among Fellows, Trainees and International Medical Graduates (IMGs) for the College’s commitment to dealing with discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment in surgery with 95 per cent of Fellows, 96 per cent of Trainees and 93 per cent of IMGs surveyed supporting the College’s commitment.

The evaluation report identified RACS education program and the visibility of our *Let’s operate with respect* campaign as significant and successful elements of the Building Respect work. It found that one of the key strengths of the Action Plan was the highlighting of the evidence linking behaviour to patient safety in its messaging and call to action with 95 per cent of Fellows, 98 per cent of Trainees and 97 per cent of IMGs agreed that there is a relationship between behaviour and patient safety.

Findings with implications for future work centred around the need to

increase levels of trust in our complaints management system. RACS complaints process, like other complaints processes, was not perceived as safe, with 55% of respondents citing fears of identification and negative career consequences holding them back from speaking up. The findings also highlighted that some pockets of resistance to cultural change remain, underlining our recognition that change of the magnitude envisaged will require a sustained, multi-pronged approach – some say as much as ‘a generation of effort’.

The evaluation was designed to make sure our work to build respect in surgery is targeted and effective. Results of the evaluation will inform future work and shape RACS priorities as we continue our efforts to build respect in surgery.

The next phase of activity will build on the positive gains made to date. We will evolve our communications from a focus on awareness of unprofessional behaviours to messaging which urges those who see unprofessional conduct to take action. We will continue our educational efforts through ongoing delivery of our Operating with Respect course, and as we target new groups – including Trainees – we will equip our surgical workforce to be active bystanders – to take the action we are calling for in our messaging. We have reviewed our complaints management and are working hard to forge the approach and the partnerships with those who have the legislated powers to take action. We will ensure the necessary policy framework is in place to reinforce and ensure sustainability of our efforts, and will continue our leadership amongst partners including government, employers and medical colleges to underpin a health system-wide approach to action on these issues.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Continue to improve workplace culture in the surgical profession
- Continue to improve trust in our complaints management system
- Evolve our communications from a focus on awareness of unprofessional behaviours to urging action
- Ongoing delivery of our Operating with Respect course, targeting new groups and equipping the surgical workforce to take action
- Partner with those who have the legislated powers to take action
- Ensure the necessary policy framework is in place to reinforce and ensure sustainability of our efforts
- Continue our leadership amongst partners to underpin a health system-wide approach to action

