



Royal Australasian

College of Surgeons

Te Whare Piki Ora o Māhutonga

KAWERONGO

RAUMATI Summer 2025





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Mihimihi – Kaiārahi update

Kaua e whakaarohia te mahinga, ēngari te otinga

Think not of the labour but of the completion

Tēnā koutou katoa e hoa mā

As we close out the year, I want to take a moment to acknowledge each of you for your hard work and dedication throughout your surgical training journey – wherever you may be. Your commitment to hard work, excellence and cultural integrity enriches our specialty, helps our patients and strengthens our communities.

This year has brought some challenges and some successes, many of which are summarised in this newsletter. As of 2026, our rōpū includes 33 surgeons and 38 SET trainees across five specialties. Dr Nasya Thompson has submitted a manuscript to the ANZ Journal of Surgery summarised the responses of tauira and tākuta to our survey. Key findings were the need for mentorship and support, access to a Māori psychologist for assistance, help navigating racism, and balancing cultural identity with surgical training. Consequently, we are planning a one-day meeting Tamaki Makau Rau in April 2026 open to all tauira and junior doctors. We will run a series of workshops to assist in career planning, managing racism, training scheme application, examination preparation, navigating training and retaining and growing cultural identity. I hope you can all attend.

Wishing you all a restful and joyful holiday season. Here's to a successful 2026.

Kaimanaaki – Counselling

As part of the College's commitment to ensure RACS is a safe place to identify as Indigenous, Te Rau Poka offers free counselling through qualified counsellor Di Waters (Kai Tahu, Kāti Mamoe, Waitaha, Ngāti Kahungunu). To book a time to speak with Di please email kindred@xtra.co.nz. If you have a preferred counsellor or psychologist-please send us an email teraupoka@surgeons.org

The College also has a process for managing complaints around bullying, discrimination and sexual harassment. See the website [Our process | RACS](#). You may also contact Prof Jonathan Koea directly Jonathan.Koea@surgeons.org



Whakanuia! 2025 Māori Health Medal Award

Congratulations to Dr. John Mutu- Grigg FRACS who is this year's recipient of the RACS Māori Health Medal. The Māori Health Advisory Group met prior to the celebration dinner and John was very surprised when his whānau joined in for the award ceremony. Past winners were in the room including Prof Pat Alley, Prof Jonathan Koea and Maxine Ronald who read the nomination out. Prof Koea welcomed the guests and VIPs. Ben Cribb closed the evening with a karakia. He mihi mahana ki a koe John mō tō honore nui. Read the RACS report here. [Honouring Dr John Mutu-Grigg: RACS Māori Health Medal recipient | RACS](#)



Owen Ung and John Mutu-Grigg.
Photo courtesy of Gabrielle Mutu- Grigg.



Ngā Whakaahua- Photo Gallery



Very proud Mutu-Grigg whānui.
Photos courtesy of Gabrielle Mutu-Grigg.



Also proud RACs whānau



The medal was engraved with the mangopare design.
Photo courtesy of Michelle Mutu-Grigg, John's sister who put the taonga there as a size comparison and sent to their wider whānau who could not attend the event.



Te ORA Hui a Tau 2025

The Rā Tuhura and Hui-a-Tau was held at Te Whare Wānanga o Raukawa in Otaki 25-28 September. Prof. Jonathan Koea attended the hui along with RACS staff who attended on careers day and to the awards dinner. Wiremu MacFater and Kopa Manahi were the surgeons in residence helping to teach the tamariki surgical skills.

The College of Palliative Care took out the best in show with their poem at the Shark Tank. Congratulations also to Jamie-Lee Rahiri who was recognised at the awards dinner for her mentoring work with students.



Kopa Manahi



All hands on deck!



Kopa Manahi and Wiremu MacFater with tamariki and taurira Māori.



Kaupapa Hou – Upcoming Events

Te Rau Poka hui 2026

We are holding the Wānanga Whakarite - SET preparation workshop in Wellington on the 15-16 May. Please email teraupoka@surgeons.org to register. We are also looking for trainees and surgeons to support the day.

The National hui a tau will be held in Auckland early August 2025. Suggestions for topics are welcome. This hui also qualifies for CPD - 7 points for a whole day event.

Whakanuia! – Congratulations!

HRC Maori Health Clinical Research training Fellowship

Congratulations to Dr Jaclyn Aramoana who was one of two recipients of this award.

ASC Awards

Congratulations to Dr Meg Beaumont and Dr Julia Tairua-Doyle who have each won the ASC Peer Support Award and Career Enhancement Grant for Junior Doctor – Indigenous Programme and will attend the ASC in Perth next year.

Rangahau Raumati Summer Research award 2025

Congratulations to Dr Amy Waters who is the Inaugural Rangahau Raumati award recipient. We will highlight Amy's research in the next issue.

GSSE Success

Congratulations to all the students who have passed stage one of the GSSE. Nasya Thompson, Maia Tipene, Sydney Clough, Helaman Luki and Anahera Herewini. Ka mau te wehi te ihi.

Te Huarahi Roa- The long journey

Nasya Thompson has submitted the manuscript of the research she completed in 2025 to the ANZ Journal of Surgery for publication. Fantastic work Nasya.



Ngā Hononga – Partnerships

Pūhoro Trust

Our partnership with Pūhoro Trust is ongoing. There are 12 STEMM events happening next year across the motu, 6 in term 3 and 6 in term 4. Thank you to the surgeons who supported us this year in 7 regions in the North Island and 1 in the South Island.

Ngā mihi nui, huge thanks to the first-time presenters Dr Nasya Thompson, Dr Ailsa Wilson, Dr Jared White, and Dr Nigel Henderson. Many thanks to returning surgeons Dr John Mutu-Grigg, Prof Jonathan Koea and piki mihi ki a Dr Maia Tipene for covering three sessions in Te Tai Tokerau, Tāmaki Makaurau and Waikato.

Johnson and Johnson supported two regions Tāmaki Makaurau- Auckland and Otago Christchurch and loaned us equipment for the other regions. Many thanks to all the kaimahi at Pūhoro especially our coordinators Adele Vukula and Toni Floyd.

Te Oranga Māori Medical Students Association

Te Rau Poka has an agreement with Te Oranga Māori Students Association that includes their affiliated rōpū TOKA (Te Oranga ki Akarana) and TOKO (Te Oranga Ki Otākou). We will continue to support the hui and Kura Reo and other events organized by Te Oranga.

Te Poka Pū Surgical Interest Group

Te Rau Poka has an agreement with Te Poka Pū – An Independent Māori Surgical Interest Group comprising over 170 members. Te Poka Pū delivered 4 webinars this year on surgical topics. For more information check out the website [Te Poka Pū | Te Piringa Kōtuku](#) and join their Facebook group.

SKILLS Faculty needed

The SKILLS team kindly donated 40 suturing kits and some text books to Te Rau Poka surgical academy. We have used these in our Pūhoro STEMM roadshows this year and as raffle prizes for Te ORA and Te Oranga events.

SKILLS is now asking for volunteers to become Faculty in the New Zealand courses. If you have time and energy, it would be much appreciated. Please register your interest here: [Teach on a RACS skills course | RACS](#). Te Rau Poka will support any Māori surgeons who are willing to help with travel bookings and processing reimbursements and will gift a customised scrub top to any successful volunteers.



Whakapiri mai – Join the Academy!

Tēnei au te hōkai nuku, te hōkai rangi

Te Rau Poka refers to the pursuit of excellence in surgery but in a holistic sense, encompassing all aspects of one's being, such as physical, mental, spiritual, and cultural.

It represents a core value in Māori culture, which emphasises the importance of striving for excellence and maintaining a balanced way of life. This concept can be understood through the pūrākau (legend) of the acquisition of knowledge by Tāne Nui A Rangi.

Te Rau Poka provides support and guidance to Māori interested in surgical careers, creating a pipeline of tauira (students) from secondary school onwards to surgical leadership roles. There are 58 students currently registered with Te Rau Poka.

To join the Academy, please scan the QR code below and fill out the form. To enter the prize draw put RAUMATI in the comments section. The prize is a Surgical Suturing Kit.

To meet the team, check out our webpage on [Te Rau Poka – Māori Surgical Academy | RACS](#). For any questions please contact us at teraupoka@surgeons.org

