
ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

MEDIA RELEASE



Top surgeons gathering at the Top End

Leading surgeons will meet in Darwin this week to share knowledge and learnings on how to reduce the impact of injuries in rural and Indigenous communities, according to the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.

At the heart of the conference is the over-representation of road trauma statistics in the Northern Territory reaching more than 17 deaths per 100,000 people.

The Provincial Surgeons of Australia (PSA) together with the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) Indigenous Health and Trauma Committees will convene for an in-depth review of injuries and their impact on rural and remote patients, including Indigenous patients.

Mr John Crozier, Chair RACS Trauma Committee said that rather than looking at the obvious statistics, the groups were joining forces to understand the underlying causes, reflect on management strategies that work, and most importantly to advocate for change.

Mr Crozier said that central to this was participation by local community and Aboriginal leaders in the discussion.

The three day event will draw on a range of Territory, national and international perspectives on current issues including: speed limits, alcohol-related violence, domestic violence and importance of appropriate care for Indigenous people.

Associate Professor Kelvin Kong, Chair of RACS Indigenous Health Committee said that stereotypes disempowered communities.

“This symposium will highlight the social context of injury in our Indigenous communities. It will promote a better understanding of these issues crucial in our advocacy approach,” Associate Professor Kong said.

“We are extremely proud of the advocacy role that RACS has provided in helping create a safer community and wish to learn from the Darwin experience so that we can advocate strongly for a better community,” he said.

Some of Australia, New Zealand, Canada and India’s most trusted trauma and regional surgeons, clinicians and researchers will be at the event, which coincides with the 50th anniversary conference of the Provincial Surgeons of Australia.

Dr Mahiban Thomas, Convenor of the Provincial Surgeons of Australia said that it was a very special point in the history of the PSA, which represents rural surgeons of Australia and New Zealand.

“Trauma is everybody’s business and we wish to be proactive in preventing injury. This meeting in Darwin will help to deliberate, inform and provide new direction,” Dr Thomas said.

Background: *The tripartite event runs from Thursday 21 August to Saturday 23 August at the Darwin Convention Centre. The full program is available at http://www.surgeons.org/media/20915704/psa_2014_and_trauma_symposium_final_program.pdf*

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