



MEDIA RELEASE

RACS Applauds New Wait List Research but says Demand still Greater than Supply

Friday 7 November, 2014

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) applauds new research that highlights the number of patients who were not receiving hip or knee replacement surgery due to resource restrictions in two District Health Boards (DHBs) but says more work still needs to be done.

The research, published today in the New Zealand Medical Journal, showed that for patients who would benefit from hip and knee replacements, 36 percent are not able to receive this operation in the public sector.

RACS Executive Director of Surgical Affairs, Mr Allan Panting says that anecdotal information suggests many patients were unable to gain access to publicly funded surgery.

“The College of Surgeons has been working closely with the Ministry of Health to improve the way patients are prioritised across many surgical procedures,” Mr Panting said.

“The Government has increased elective surgery numbers in recent years however the demand for elective surgery is still greater than the supply.

“We try to provide surgery to those patients who are most in need,” Mr Panting said.

Mr Panting said that with only limited resources, elective surgery is prioritised to advantage those patients who are considered to be most in need of and most likely to benefit from the treatment.

For those not offered surgical treatment, their conditions continue to cause them to suffer moderate to severe pain.

“Research such as that published today gives information that will help funders decide the appropriate allocation of resources for elective surgery for New Zealanders,” Mr Panting said.

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ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS



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About the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)

RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in New Zealand and Australia. The College is a not-for-profit organisation that represents more than 7000 surgeons and 1300 surgical trainees and International Medical Graduates. RACS also supports healthcare and surgical education in the Asia-Pacific region and is a substantial funder of surgical research. There are nine surgical specialties in Australasia being: Cardiothoracic surgery, General surgery, Neurosurgery, Orthopaedic surgery, Otolaryngology Head-and-Neck surgery, Paediatric surgery, Plastic and Reconstructive surgery, Urology and Vascular surgery.

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