

# NEWS FROM DARWIN - WHERE EVERYTHING IS DIFFERENT

RACS Tristate ASM (NT, WA, & SA.) Held 7th -8th August 2015, Darwin

**PADDY BADE**  
NT/WA/SA Convenor, 2015

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Even the agenda was different:

The Theme of the conference was "Extended Scope of Practice" (Generalism) and its role alongside Sub-Speciality Surgery. Over the two days, much wisdom was imparted about surgical governance, models of care and access to care in Regional Australia

The conference opened with clear presentations on surgical administration by active surgeons. Graeme Campbell, RACS Vice President, gave his account of college advocacy and changing work culture.

Phil Carson provided insights from Council, and Tom Bowles who gave an entertaining assessment of what life is

like as a Regional Chair in WA.

Highlights: There was a multidisciplinary flavour, this included inspiring presentations from:

- Simon Quilty, a physician who has set up a solo specialist practice a Katherine Hospital NT.
- Joseph Carpini a psychologist from WA, who gave a stimulating talk on communication in the Operating Theatre auditing team performance.
- Vanitha Devi and Richard Bradbury two surgical fellows presented the diversity of general surgery performed at Darwin and their mastery of it.

The Registrar presentations were all of a high standard, and it was great to see young registrars involved, and presenting their research to the fellowship. Congratulations in particular to Tara Luck, for her winning presentation on 'Emergency



Tara Luck

neurosurgery in Darwin.'

The audience was active, and engaged in spirited discussion throughout the two days. There was a lively and highly entertaining debate; "Does Quality in Surgery Require High Volume?" After much deliberation the audience 'clap-o-meter' awarded the points to the 'no team.'

Overall a total of 50 surgeons and eight sponsors attended the weekend; unfortunately the preconference surgical education course was poorly attended.

There was a great social programme, and the ASM coincided with the Darwin Festival for delegates to enjoy in their free time.

Thank you to the organising Committee, Stephanie Weidlich, Lesley Stewart, Angela D' Castro, Stephanie Gillies, and Gayle Bradbrook



(Left to right): Nick Vrodos, David Fletcher, Michael Levitt, Graeme Campbell, Phil Carson, Tom Bowles

# GLOBAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

Specialist Colleges come together to advance Universal Access to Safe, Affordable Surgical and Anaesthetic Care when needed, in the Asia Pacific



**PHILLIP CARSON**  
Chair, External Affairs

**O**n 26 October 2015, the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and Lancet Commission on Global Surgery will convene a public Global Health Symposium to address the challenges and barriers to improving health systems and surgical services in many low and middle income countries.

Safe surgery and anaesthesia are vital to effectively treat much of the global burden of non-communicable diseases and injuries and contribute to the provision of safe child-birth where complications arise. Yet an estimated 5 billion of the world's population are unable to access safe surgery when they need it, and only 6% of the 313 million procedures performed annually are done in the world's poorest countries.

The evidence base for emergency and essential surgical care being necessary

for any health system is sound. The Global Initiative for Emergency and Essential Surgical Care has succeeded in translating it into policy with the help of many countries, together with Colleges, Societies and NGOs representing surgeons and anaesthetists.

In 2015, the Millennium Development Goals, which never mentioned surgery, will be replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals. The health goal, Universal Health Coverage by 2030, includes surgery and the reporting of surgical indicators – a big win for all those people needing essential, safe surgery.

A WHO World Health Assembly Resolution on strengthening emergency and essential surgical care was passed by 194 member nations in May 2015. This resolution was critical because Ministers of Health are guided by the recommendations of the WHO when implementing healthcare decisions for their country. But it will require significant and sustained political commitment and substantial investment of resources by individual countries, to put policy into practice and improve surgical care at the country and regional level.

In late 2013 the Lancet launched a Commission into Global Surgery with the goal of promoting Universal Access to safe, affordable surgical and anaesthesia care when needed, where access encompasses safety, affordability, timeliness and capacity to deliver. The College is collaborating with the Lancet Commission to advance this agenda.

The Symposium Program will focus

on four key issues outlined in the recent Lancet Commission on Global Surgery report as being critical to achieving universal access to safe surgery and anaesthesia by 2030: Strengthening health systems, Solving workforce issues, Sustainable financing of health care systems and Ensuring sufficient quality and safety.

The discussions at the Symposium will inform an Asia Pacific Leaders' Forum at the College on 27 October. The Forum will be attended by representatives from specialist colleges in the Asia Pacific including the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists, Australian Society of Anaesthetists, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Royal Australasian College of Physicians, Pacific Islands Surgeons Association and Singapore College of Surgeons and a group of key decision-makers from throughout the region. This Forum will be tasked with developing a roadmap for professional colleges in the Asia Pacific, in promoting universal access to safe surgery, to 2030.

Registration for the public Symposium on Monday 26 October is open to health practitioners, public health specialists, trainees and medical students and the general public. Please refer to [www.surgeons.org](http://www.surgeons.org) for details or contact: [stephanie.korin@surgeons.org](mailto:stephanie.korin@surgeons.org) to register.

The Symposium is sponsored by the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists and the Australian Medical Council and the RACS Foundation for Surgery.