

PROGRAMS IN MYANMAR

The College's Foundation for Surgery has agreed to co-fund annual scholarships



James Kong with PTC Course Participant Dr Aye Thiri Naing

The College's Foundation for Surgery has agreed to co-fund annual scholarships to enable Myanmar doctors to travel to Australasia to gain exposure to advanced health and hospital systems.

An initiative of the RACS Global Health Committee, the new scholarship will be modelled on the successful Weary Dunlop Boonpong Fellowship Exchange Program for Thai doctors which the College has successfully co-administered with the Royal College of Surgeons of Thailand for more than 20 years.

The Foundation for Surgery has agreed to provide the bulk of the required funding to support the scholarship program with seed funding also provided by local donors in Myanmar.

The College is now in the process of formalising a Letter of Agreement with the Department of Health Professional Resource Development & Management of the Myanmar Ministry of Health, with the first Scholarship recipients to commence their program in Australia next year.

The new scholarship program builds upon the collaboration between the College and the Myanmar Medical Association to initiate Primary Trauma Care (PTC) training in the wake of Cyclone Nargis, to increase the national health system's capacity to provide effective trauma care to the population.

Since 2009, the PTC Program has trained over 1500 national health providers to deliver basic frontline trauma care, more

than 200 doctors have been trained as instructors and 22 senior doctors are being mentored through a Masterclass program, to oversee the longer term sustainability of PTC training in the country. Today the PTC course in Myanmar is self-managed and will soon become a mandatory training component for all medical graduates.

Since 2012, the RACS has also worked alongside Fellows of Australasian College of Emergency Medicine (ACEM) and the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) and the Myanmar Ministry of Health to introduce and deliver a sustainable, specialist training program in Emergency Medicine (EM), a specialty and service which did not previously exist as an independent specialty in Myanmar.

In the initial phase of the Emergency Medicine Development Program that ran throughout 2012 and 2013, 18 surgeons were trained as EM specialists and received a Diploma in Emergency Medicine.

A second cohort of eight doctors commenced their EM training in 2014 and successfully completed their program in August this year. A Masters in EM program - similar to the training for all local specialists and led by a local faculty in conjunction with international partners - also began in January this year.

Since the graduation of the first cohort, for the first time, the major hospitals in the three key cities in Myanmar – Yangon, Mandalay and Naypyidaw - now have Emergency Departments led by accredited specialists. These doctors with EM specialist training are expected to be the teachers of emergency medicine and they will help improve the quality of front line healthcare.

The Director of the RACS' Myanmar Program, Dr James Kong, said that with the collaboration over recent years, the College had developed strong relationships with the Myanmar medical leaders. Following discussions with them and hearing of their desire to enable the next generation of Myanmar medical leaders to obtain modern healthcare delivery experience and technical skills from the international community, the College agreed to set up a scholarship program to enable young, promising Myanmar surgeons to obtain exposure in the Australian system and gain clinical experience and the leadership skills needed to advance the development of modern healthcare in the new Myanmar.

"None of the success achieved so far through the College's Myanmar Program would have been possible without the commitment to build capacity from the College's initial foray in 2009, rather than provide humanitarian aid," Dr Kong said.

"Providing PTC train-the-trainer courses and Master classes allowed the senior doctors in Myanmar to take ownership of their own training. This approach created the goodwill



James Kong teaching the emergency life support course to Myanmar doctors

necessary for all of us from different countries and medical specialties to come to work together there.

"The partnership between the RACS, ACEM and ANZCA and other international colleagues from Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore has also been crucial.

"That international collaboration enabled us to formulate and execute EM training in Myanmar within three months of the initial request with a shoe-string budget; an astonishing achievement!

"We always knew that having international physicians and surgeons flying in and out of Myanmar teaching was unsustainable long term. To be successful we aimed to train a large enough initial cohort of EM doctors to establish the specialty and drive its development into the future.

"I believe that this objective has been met.

"Nevertheless, the provision of effective, quality trauma and emergency care for the injured remains an enormous challenge.

"Myanmar is about the size of NSW with an estimated population of 65 million, so three major hospitals with emergency departments will not have a significant effect in a country where the vast bulk of the population live outside the cities."

Recent data from World Bank on physician numbers in Myanmar and Australia		
	Myanmar	Australia
Physicians	17791	47875
Physicians per capita (per 1,000 persons)	0.39	2.47
Population (million)	53.26	23.13
Rural : Urban	66.1:33.9	100:89.1

The new scholarship program also builds on assistance provided to Myanmar Surgeons through the College's Rowan Nicks Scholarship and the Surgeons International Award Program.

During the initial roll-out of the EM training program, the College funded three Myanmar specialists to visit emergency departments and trauma centres in Melbourne, Sydney and Hobart.

Since 2005, the College has supported three Cardiac Surgeons and a Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon from Yangon General Hospital to undertake advanced surgical and leadership training in Australian hospitals.

Two of those Cardiac surgeons, Prof Khin Maung Lwin and Prof Win Win Kyaw returned to Myanmar to take up active leadership roles as Director and Deputy Director of Cardiac Surgery at Yangon General Hospital. With the ongoing support and mentorship of her Australian supervisor, Mr Bruce French, Prof Win Win Kyaw planned the design and led the opening of the first open heart surgery unit in Myanmar in 2012.

The third Cardiac Surgeon and Plastic Surgeon are currently undertaking placements in Melbourne and will return to Yangon next year.

The new scholarships will be awarded annually to one or more qualified health professionals nominated by the Myanmar surgical and orthopaedic societies and Ministry of Health.

Recipients will undertake an attachment in an Australian/ New Zealand hospital(s) for a period of three to four months. Administration of the program will be co-ordinated by the RACS' Global Health Department in collaboration with the Myanmar partners.

Dr Kong said the main objective of the scholarships was to give Myanmar doctors exposure to modern hospital systems.

"While some surgeons may use the scholarship to gain advanced surgical training, most Myanmar doctors already have good technical skills," he said. "However, the need to develop and enhance Myanmar healthcare delivery through better systems, processes and management is crucial!"

"With the knowledge gained, they can return to mentor their colleagues and teach their juniors. This is another aspect of capacity building and I believe the potential impact of this scholarship program on the future of healthcare in Myanmar is substantial and will hopefully result in improved access to quality care for the people of Myanmar."

The Myanmar Program continues to support skills development through the provision of the Australian and New Zealand Surgical Skills Education and Training (ASSET) Course, the Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) Course and further PTC Master Classes.

Upper GI, Bariatric and Endocrine Surgery Fellowship 2016

Since 2011 Pindara Private Hospital has offered a one year Fellowship in Upper GI, Bariatric and Endocrine Surgery in conjunction with the Gold Coast Hospital. The Fellowship is offered under the supervision and guidance of Dr Leigh Rutherford and Dr Jorrie Jordaan working at both hospitals.

The Fellowship offers outstanding training in Upper GI, Bariatric and Endocrine Surgery with a substantial clinical work load in operating theatres. The holder of the Fellowship will be required to participate in the Bond Medical Student teaching program at Pindara Private Hospital and also be encouraged to participate in clinical research programs and will be offered the opportunity to initiate clinical/collaborative research study.

This Fellowship in Upper GI, Bariatric and Endocrine Surgery is to be offered again for 2016.

The Fellowship is for one year at Pindara Private Hospital.

This Fellowship provides exposure to the private hospital sector at Pindara Private Hospital in conjunction with public care at the Gold Coast Hospital.

You will hold a FRACS, be eligible for registration with the Medical Board of Australia, and be seeking further experience in Upper GI, Bariatric and Endocrine Surgery. You will work under the supervision of the two specialist surgeons and assist with private surgical operations. You will require personal medical indemnity cover.

The remuneration provided by the Fellowship is \$75,000 AUD per annum. Income will be supplemented from private surgical assisting and for duties at Gold Coast Hospital.

Further information regarding the Fellowship and application requirements may be obtained from:

Dr Leigh Rutherford Suite 1, Level 4, Pacific Private Clinic, 123 Nerang Street, Southport Qld 4215

p. 07 5571 2477 f. 07 5571 2488 e. lapsurg@bigpond.net.au or Trish Hogan – CEO Pindara Private Hospital p. 07 5588 9040 e. hogant@ramsayhealth.com.au

Applications close on Friday 23rd October 2015.

Neurosurgery and Spinal Surgery Fellowship 2016

Pindara Private Hospital is offering a one year Fellowship in Neuro and Spinal Surgery. The Fellowship is offered under the supervision and guidance of Dr Leong Tan; Dr Ellison Stephenson; Dr Chris Schwindack; and Dr Neil Cleaver.

The Fellowship offers outstanding training in Neuro and Spinal Surgery with a substantial clinical work load in operating theatres. The holder of the Fellowship will be required to participate in the Bond Medical Student Teaching Program and the Post Graduate Neurosurgical Nursing Program at Pindara Private Hospital, and will be encouraged to participate in clinical research programs and collaborative research study.

This Fellowship offered will be commencing in February 2016.

The Fellowship is for one year at Pindara Private Hospital.

This Fellowship provides exposure to the private hospital sector at Pindara Private Hospital with some rotation to Allamanda Private Hospital as required.

You will hold a FRACS or international equivalent, be eligible for registration with the Medical Board of Australia, and be seeking further experience in Neuro and Spinal Surgery. You will work under the supervision of the above specialist surgeons and assist with private surgical operations. You will require personal medical indemnity cover.

The remuneration provided by the Fellowship is \$75,000 AUD per annum. Income will be supplemented from private surgical assisting.

Further information regarding the Fellowship and application requirements may be obtained from:

Dr Ellison Stephenson Suite 409, Level 4, Pindara Specialist Suites, 29 Carrara Street, Benowa 4217.

p. 07 5564 8480 f. 07 5564 8481 e. ellison@elsneuro.com or

Trish Hogan – CEO Pindara Private Hospital p. 07 5588 9040 e. hogant@ramsayhealth.com.au

Applications close on Friday 23rd October 2015.

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