MEDIA RELEASE

Surgery: An Integral Component of Universal Health Coverage

Friday 6 April, 2018

Five billion of the world’s population have limited, delayed, or no access to emergency and essential surgical care.

This World Health Day, Saturday 7 April, the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) emphasises that surgery is an integral component of Universal Health Coverage. More people die each year from lack of access to emergency and essential surgical care than do from HIV, TB, and malaria combined.

Universal Health Coverage enables all people and communities to access the health services they need, including access to emergency and essential surgery, without suffering financial hardship.

"RACS is committed to taking concrete steps to advance the health of all people," said Mr John Batten, RACS President.

RACS supports medical education, training, and leadership in 18 countries across the Asia-Pacific region. Every year, RACS supports over 1,000 Asia-Pacific health workers in medical education and training, while performing nearly 2,000 life-changing procedures.

"RACS has been, for many years, a passionate supporter of the need to improve access to emergency surgery and has shown leadership in building surgical development regionally and across the world," said Professor Brendan Murphy, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health, Australian Government.

Visiting medical teams and in-country personnel provide clinical mentoring and education to national doctors, nurses and allied health professionals and deliver ‘train-the-trainer’ programs to strengthen the institutional capacity of the national health services and training institutions in a number of regions.

Teams include Fellows from a range of Specialist Medical Colleges and other health care providers including nursing, physiotherapy and optometry. Program activities are focused on the sustainable delivery of services and training that increase national capacity.

RACS Global Health Programs also award scholarships to local surgeons and health professionals from the Asia-Pacific region for clinical attachments and leadership development at Australian and New Zealand Hospitals.

For further information or to arrange an interview with RACS President Mr John Batten please email Abderazzaq Noor Abderazzaq_noor@surgeons.org.

About the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)

RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia and New Zealand. 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.

www.surgeons.org

Media inquiries: Abderazzaq Noor, Manager, Communications & Advocacy
   t: +61 3 9249 1263 | m: +61 429 028 983