



Australia and Malaysia working together to improve craniofacial surgical outcomes

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Delegates to the 81st Annual Scientific Congress (ASC) of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons have been told of the longstanding partnership of Australian and Malaysian craniofacial surgeons.

Professor David David, a distinguished Adelaide based Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon, told delegates of the last time the College held its ASC in Kuala Lumpur, in 1978, when it was decided to support Malaysia's efforts to provide health care services to the severely facially deformed.

"A relationship was established between the Malaysian Ministry of Health and the Department of Health in South Australia via the Australian Craniofacial Unit (ACFU)," Professor David said. "It involved teaching in Malaysia by Australian surgical teams, and the training in Australia and Malaysia of relevant surgeons and other health care professionals."

"It has also involved the treating of patients in Malaysia to a level appropriate for the system, and the treating of more complex patients in Australia. We have also worked with health authorities to establish multidisciplinary teams and protocol driven care pathways."

Professor David outlined the results of these efforts. Over this time period 6 full time Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons have been trained in Australia, others have done some of their training in Australia, and administrators, orthodontists and speech therapists have been trained and supported. More than 277 complex patients have been managed by the ACFU. And approximately 5,000 patients have been managed in 10 Malaysian centres.

"It has been a stimulating project for the surgeons and health care professionals involved but, most importantly, it has been a life changing project for the craniofacially deformed," Professor David said.

This year's ASC, with the theme 'The Making of a Surgeon', runs from 6 to 10 May and is being held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. Approximately 2,500 delegates from Australia, New Zealand and around the world are attending.

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