

Diversity & Inclusion Framework

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Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this document is to set out the Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand's (USANZ) commitment to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion and to set out the Framework in place to address barriers that may prevent diverse participation in USANZ.

The policy will apply to all aspects of USANZ work and apply to members, staff, professional conference organisers and other consultants undertaking work on USANZ's behalf.

Policy

1. Commitment

USANZ represents urological surgeons and also administers the Surgical Education & Training (SET) Program on behalf of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS). While the majority of USANZ members are RACS Fellows, USANZ membership includes urological surgeons with vocational registration in Aotearoa New Zealand, researchers, and others working in the field of urology. Our members are our most valuable resource and their collective expertise, lived experiences and capabilities constitute a significant part of USANZ's culture and reputation.

USANZ is committed to fostering and promoting a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion and recognises the importance of demonstrating dignity and respect to our members, patients, staff and other stakeholders. This commitment includes eliminating both interpersonal and institutional racism and a zero-tolerance approach for discrimination in any form.

Our work is focussed on ensuring equitable access and participation by members in all USANZ activities and on building a membership base that treats others respectfully and has an understanding of cultural sensitivities.

2. USANZ Leadership Role

As a trusted authority and leader in the practice, education and professional issues relating to Urological Surgery, USANZ has the capacity to promote diversity and inclusion within the urological community in the following ways:

- As a responsible organisation for delivering the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) surgical training accreditation, USANZ can influence standards and support the RACS Board of Urology (BOU) to deliver on the expectations relating to employment and funding impacting on training, flexibility and workplace practices and thereby gender equity.
- In collaboration with all USANZ Committees, Sections, Advisory Groups and collaborating partner organisations, we can set and communicate expectations for, and expressly monitor progress towards, achieving Diversity and Inclusion objectives.
- We can support RACS professional development activities aimed at increasing our members' levels of cultural competence.

- We can embed anti-discrimination practices into policies and procedures and seek ways to address any barriers to members participating in Society activities.
- Identify mechanisms to support and promote the achievements of surgical women in urology.
- We can recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the traditional landowners of Australia and Māori as the tangata whenua (people of the land) of Aotearoa New Zealand and respect their continuing connection to culture, land, waterways, community and whānau/family.
- Support actions in the RACS Te Rautaki Māori Action Plans (Māori Health Strategy and Action Plan) and Reconciliation Action Plans.
- We can encourage submissions from women and members of diverse backgrounds to USANZ EOI processes for member opportunities such as appointment to external committees or speakers.

3. Expected Outcomes

Increasing USANZ diversity and inclusion will have the following benefits:

- Improved experience of Trainees during training, including their work- life balance, leading to better health outcomes.
- Reduced numbers of surgical Trainees withdrawing from training before completion due to reasons such as discrimination, and lack of flexible and family friendly work practices.
- More effective Board of Directors and committees.
- Surgeons who are culturally competent will engage better with their patients and their healthcare teams; harmonious clinical work leads to better patient safety and outcomes.
- Enhanced reputation of USANZ as a leader in setting standards in line with contemporary community expectations.

4. Priority areas and objectives

4.1 Overarching priorities

USANZ objectives are organised under the 4 areas set out below. These areas will assist us to be transparent and accountable for making progress by gathering data and reporting back to members.

- Inclusive culture and leadership excellence
Intentionally create a culture of inclusion amongst the urological community through advocacy and communicating diversity initiatives.
- Gender equity
Advocate for measurable, sustainable and positive change in the status of women in USANZ and support RACS initiatives to increase the representation of women in the practice of surgery by removing barriers to participation and introducing flexible training models for any Trainee, irrespective of gender.
- Inclusion of all diversity groups

Ensure the profession of urological surgery is accessible to all people regardless of their minority group status.

- Diverse representation on Boards and in leadership roles

Increase diversity, and in particular, the representation of women, on the USANZ Board and in other leadership roles within the Society.

4.2 Immediate priorities

Diversity groups referred include, but are not limited to, people identified by:

- Gender
- Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori peoples
- Ethnicity
- Sexual orientation and identity (LGBTIQA)
- Disability
- Religion
- Age.

USANZ recognises there may be overlap in diversity qualities and that its members are under-represented in more than one category.

The USANZ Board has agreed that initial efforts will concentrate on the 2 categories: gender; and Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori peoples.

5. Implementation Framework

All USANZ Members, employees and consultants have a vital role in helping USANZ to increase diversity and build an inclusive culture. The success of our efforts will be influenced by our collective clinical activities, decisions or engagement with Society processes and in our direct interactions with colleagues and other stakeholders.

USANZ recognises that building and maintaining a diverse and equitable environment is an ongoing process. Our approach is to embed initiatives across all operations, policies and procedures.

Oversight and implementation of this work includes, but is not limited to, the following.

- Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Initially formed to develop USANZ's diversity and inclusion plan, the D&I Committee evolved to facilitate the provision of advice to the Board and to monitor and contribute to specific diversity initiatives. The Committee Chair is a USANZ Director and Committee members have roles involving: social media activity; identifying appropriate content for promotion to the broader membership base; the promotion of careers in urology to the broader medical community; liaising with the SWANZU committee and Board of Urology (BOU); and developing recommendations to the Board for strategic initiatives.

- Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori peoples

USANZ acknowledges the wealth of evidence confirming significant inequity exists for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Maori people in healthcare. This includes inequity of access, inequity of quality, and unequal benefit of quality improvement, all of which lead to inequity of outcomes.

The *USANZ Position Statement on Indigenous Health* affirms USANZ's endorsement and adoption of the [RACS Indigenous Health Position Paper](#) which outlines RACS' ongoing obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) and the Close the Gap Statement of Intent. The USANZ Policy is intended to support all USANZ members and staff in both Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand to understand the importance of Indigenous health and cultural safety and how this relates to their work.

The D&I Committee provides oversight of initiatives aimed at addressing barriers to Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori peoples. This work will generally be carried out in consultation with the RACS Indigenous Health Committee to ensure consistency with their Te Rautaki Māori Action Plans (Māori Health Strategy and Action Plan) and Reconciliation Action Plans that have been developed in consultation with the communities concerned.

The *New Zealand Section of the USANZ adopted Position Statement on Institutional Racism*, outlining the shared commitment to eliminating both interpersonal and institutional racism. The Section works closely with Māori organisations to ensure that te Tiriti o Waitangi is upheld at all levels of the Section and will incorporate the principles of tino rangatiratanga (Māori sovereignty), partnership, active protection, options and equity.

- SWANZU Committee and the Panel Pledge

The SWANZU Committee facilitates the provision of advice to the Board on improving gender equity both within USANZ and the broader medical community. SWANZU's role includes advocating for positive change in the status of women within USANZ; advocating for gender equity in relation to the RACS SET training program; identifying deficiencies in USANZ policies and drawing these to the attention of the Board; and assisting with identification of women members to hold representative roles on stakeholder committees of projects.

The Board has adopted the *Panel Pledge* which was developed with the goal of significant and sustainable increase in the representation of women in leadership in Australia. USANZ is committed to increasing the visibility and contribution of women leaders in urology and has adopted the target of 40% women, 40% male and 20 % flexible (40/40/20 target) to provide a benchmark against which progress will be monitored.

- RACS Surgical Education & Training / Board of Urology

USANZ will work with the RACS Board of Urology to implement RACS initiatives such as the Cultural Competencies Curriculum for urology in the SET Program. It will also identify and make recommendations to remove barriers to participation by women, such as the availability of flexible training options. The USANZ D&I Committee will have a role in facilitating member engagement in career path initiatives by medical training providers to encourage women and indigenous people to consider Urology as a career.

- USANZ Meeting guidelines

USANZ has notified PCOs that manage the Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) and the annual meetings of Australian Sections of our expectations in relation the Panel Pledge (for Scientific and Organising Committees as well as presenters and Chairs) and the Acknowledgement of Country. Meeting Guidelines for Australian Sections are in development. These guidelines will also address methods to refine data collection and enable more transparent reporting.

- Benchmarking and Reporting

The Committee is accountable for making progress in implementing initiatives to increase diversity. Initiatives will establish benchmarks, gather data and report publicly on progress to members. Accountability mechanisms will be included in policies, procedures, and practices. The main vehicle for reporting is the annual Member Activity Report.

Related policies, documents and legislation

- Diversity & Inclusion Committee Terms of Reference
- Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2023
- USANZ Indigenous Health Position Statement
- USANZ NZ Section - Position Statement on Institutional Racism
- Surgical Women in Australian and New Zealand Urology (SWANZU) Committee Terms of Reference
- USANZ Panel Pledge

Superseded documents

- None

Revision history

Version	Date approved	Notes	By
1.0	25/11/2023	Approved.	Board of Directors

Review date

This policy will be reviewed every 5 years. The next review will be in November 2028

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