

Dr Sally Langley | President

T: +61 3 9276 7404 **M:** +64 21 650 160

E: college.president@surgeons.org

John Biviano | Chief Executive Officer

T: +61 3 9276 7401 **M:** +61 447 322 773

E: john.biviano@surgeons.org

4 November 2021

COUNCIL COMMUNIQUE
October 2021

The Council met via videoconference and in person, where safe, at the RACS Offices . Key issues discussed are summarised below.

Obituaries Noted

Mr William Wybrow Hallwright FRACS General Surgeon

Mr Richard (Dick) Murray Tooth OAM FRACS Orthopaedic Surgeon

Associate Professor Brian John Miller AM FRACS General Surgeon

Mr Keith McDowell Ewen FRACS General Surgeon

Mr Ronald Geoffrey Kay FRACS General Surgeon

Professor Patrick John Molloy FRACS Cardiothoracic Surgeon

Mr John Hunter Williams FRCS Eng FRCS Ed FRACS Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon

Mr Howie Keith Forbes Wilson FRACS General and Plastic Surgeon

President's report

Dr Richard Bradbury, the NT Co-opted Councillor was welcomed to his first meeting.

Dr Charles Jenkinson, RACSTA Co-opted Councillor attended his final Council meeting and Council thank him for his valuable contribution.

Key points of discussion:

- COVID-19 and the rapid changes of conditions continues to cause great disturbances to patient care and elective surgery. Mark Ashton has met with Andrew Wilson concerning the state of hospitals in Victoria and the challenges ahead in the next coming months and a letter has been sent to Minister Hunt regarding the continuation of elective surgery. NSW and Auckland hospitals have been equally affected.
- Examinations continue to be challenged by the COVID-19 situation in Sydney and Melbourne. The GSSE and Fellowship written exams are currently underway and the RACS and specialty society staff were commended for their considerable work with respect to planning and organisation.
- A meeting held between RACS and the Australian and New Zealand Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (ANZAOMS) to continue discussions on a potential collaboration demonstrated that there is still a lack of clarity on the preferred collaboration level and the subsequent impact on related specialties. Further meetings of relevant RACS Councillors' will need to take place.
- Attendance at several virtual conferences, including the American College of Surgery (ACS) opening ceremony. Professor Guy Maddern was congratulated for having been awarded Honorary Fellowship of the ASC
- The "Time-out" podcast series created by medical students in Melbourne was highly recommended as a resource



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Election Results

Congratulations to the following Fellows who were elected and re-elected to Council after the Council Elections held in September/October 2021.

The term of the elected Council members will commence following the Annual General Meeting of the College on 5 May 2022.

Re-elected to Council

Dr Adrian Anthony
Ms Ruth Bollard
Dr Jennifer Chambers
Dr Sarah Coll
Associate Professor Kerin Fielding
Miss Annette Holian
Professor Christopher Pyke
Professor Henry Woo

Newly elected to Council

Professor Deborah Bailey

ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY Specialty Elected Councillor re-elected to Council unopposed

Dr Greg Witherow (WA)

CEO's report

Recommendations were provided to help improve to improve the relationship between Fellows and RACS staff as well as steps that could be taken to mitigate incidences of bad behaviour towards RACS staff by Fellows.

There have been great examples of Councillors and Fellows working very well with staff. Council also expressed that most experiences with staff at the college have been amazing, that staff are extraordinary and would like to have this passed on to them.

Although the Government announced on 11 October that all workers in healthcare (community and hospital based) must be vaccinated by 1 December 2021, RACS is governed by government guidelines and is responsible for a secure working environment and has yet not mandated vaccination for all staff at this point, unless staff are coming into the offices.

Surgical New – publications online

Council approved the request that Surgical News become a full digital format, as per the ANZJS. This will cause substantial savings. A paper-based version will be available upon request.

AMC/MCNZ Accreditation – update

Further development on graduate outcomes, monitoring and evaluation framework, curriculum framework, community representatives, advisor's involvement from a health, education and governance perspective is required.

The draft report has been received for factual checking and has been distributed to all the STBs. Some changes have been made or suggested

A workshop will be run in February 2022 in conjunction with BSET to focus on the AMC conditions. This gives time to understand the requirements and management of responsibilities in the process of meeting the conditions. AMC have offered to speak at the workshop.

The final report should be sighted by the end of the year.



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Foundation for Surgery Board member reappointments

Council approved the following appointments to the Foundation for Surgery Board:

Dr Ruth Mitchell Honorary Advisor
Mr Tony Lewis Honorary Advisor
Mr John Corcoran Honorary Advisor

Council noted that the following Council members have joined the Foundation Board in preparation for the establishment of the Foundation Specific Purpose Fund:

Dr Greg Witherow Ex Officio Member, RACS Treasurer
Dr Christine Lai Ex Officio Council Member

ACT Co-opted Councillor

Council approved the appointment Dr Ailene Fitzgerald for co-option to Council as the Australian Capital Territory's representative.

June 2022 Council – revised dates

Council approved for the June 2022 Council week to commence one day earlier Tuesday 21 to Thursday 23 June 2022. This is to avoid Friday 24 June 2022, Aotearoa New Zealand's (AoNZ) inaugural Matariki public holiday and school holidays.

Name Change – Communication Strategy

Council approved the proposed strategy to inform the name change that includes recognition of Aotearoa New Zealand, and reasons for change, in advance of the proposed vote next year.

Establishment of RACS Specific Purpose Fund

A RACS Specific Purpose fund for Foundation for Surgery funds will be set up to provide RACS with a level of protection against the risk of third-party claims related to non-Foundation activities.

Final sign off will be requested of Council Executive at the time of the transition of the aspects in 2022, prior to the 2022 budget preparations.

States and Territories and Aotearoa New Zealand Update (rotating)

Aotearoa New Zealand

AoNZ

Miss Philippa Mercer, Chair of AoNZ National Committee, provided an update outlining the issues being faced with the roll out and uptake of COVID-19 vaccines, as well as the major health system capacity problems with lack of staff and low ICU capacity and ED throughput. The efforts of the AoNZ team regarding examination and all the other disruptions that have occurred were acknowledged.

Dr David King, Chair South Australian State Committee, spoke to issues with the South Australian Government COVID-19 messaging, opening of borders plans and the potential future effects on hospitals and surgery. Plans to place all COVID-19 patients into one hospital and there are concerns about the significant waiting list for surgery and the M&M amongst non-COVID-19 patients due to lack of care. The new RACS SA building is proving highly successful in providing space for meetings and functions including the successful convocation and ASC hub in SA in May 2021

Council can offer support with COVID-19 advocacy through the Health Policy and Advocacy Committee (HPAC), who have been working through similar with VIC and NSW, dealing with the issues of insufficient ICU beds, furloughing of critical staff, invisibility of emergency work and the effects on patients and surgical waiting lists.



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Mr Peter Moore, Chair of the Tasmanian State Committee discussed the preparations in place for the opening of borders from 15 December to doubly vaccinated people. A peak in cases in late January or February is anticipated with a 1/3 of the population at high risk and vulnerable. Trainees have been affected by the closed borders, both for examinations and rotations. The rural health pathway is become most pressing as senior surgeons retirements cause loss of services.

Building Respect Evaluation Outcomes

Ms Ruth Friedman presented on the Building Respect Evaluation Outcomes report. The final recommendations and report are to be released in time for the 2022 ASC

RACS Awards

Congratulations to the following RACS Awards recipients:

Honorary Fellowship

Dianne Cornish
Dr Jeffrey Gershenwald

Singular Awards

Court of Honour

Dr Anthony Sparnon, FRACS
Associate Professor Julie Mundy, FRACS

Companion of the College

Dame Judith Potter

Sir Louis Barnett Medal

Professor Alistair George Royse, FRACS

Excellence in Surgery Award

Professor Paul Smith, FRACS

Distinguished Awards

John Corboy Medal

Dr Amanda Nikolic

Rural Surgeons Award

Dr William Ross, FRACS



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Admissions to Fellowship

Congratulations to the following who have been admitted to Fellowship recently.

Cardiothoracic Surgery

Jordan Ross

Neurosurgery

Dianna Li
Paul Nichols

Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery

Sarah Prunty
Samuel Roberts
Rujuta Cameron
Francisco MacArthur

Paediatric Surgery

Liesel Porrett

Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery

Maryam Seyedabadi
Katie-Beth Webster
Paul Di Giovine
Jeannine McManus
Pratik Rastogi

Vascular Surgery

Hansraj Bookun

General Surgery

Haroon Rasheed
Ahrin Anna Morrow
Carolyn Chew
Gopi Elango
Mohammad Amer
Yasser Arafat
Sarah Forsyth
Sireesha Koneru
Aaditya Narendra
Nina-Marie King

Orthopaedic Surgery

Boopalan Ramasamy
Farhaan Altaf
Aidin Sadeghilar
Caroline Varrall
Surjit Lidder
Timothy Matthews
Donald Cawthorne

Paediatric Orthopaedic Surgery

Erich Rutz

Recent RACS Publications

RACS publications that have been indexed in the SCOPUS database or presented since the September 2021 Council executive meeting.

- M. M. Dinh, Z. J. Balogh, G. Sisson and J. F. Levesque. The New South Wales Trauma Quality Improvement Program: Structure, process, outcomes and the role of trauma verification. *ANZ J Surg* (2021) Vol. 91 Issue 7-8 Pages 1331-1332.
- F. Itotoh, N. Zorbas, A. Lukman and R. James Aitken. Concordance between independent first-line assessors in the Western Australian Audit of Surgical Mortality. *ANZ J Surg* (2021) DOI: 10.1111/ans.17095



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