

Global Health Strategic Plan

2017–2021



Further information

Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
250-290 Spring Street
East Melbourne VIC 3002 Australia

Telephone: +61 3 9249 1200
Web: surgeons.org

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Committed to Indigenous health

Service | Integrity | Respect | Compassion | Collaboration

About RACS Global Health

Vision

That safe surgical and anaesthetic care is available and accessible to everyone.

Mission

1. To advocate for and provide leadership in global surgery
2. To support capacity building and leadership development in the Asia-Pacific region
3. To collaborate with international surgical bodies and other health and government organisations

Values and guiding principles

- **Collaboration:** Strong partnerships with in-country governments and collaborating organisations to achieve the highest attainable standard of health for the communities we work in. Sharing skills and resources with partners and other organisations working in the same area to provide a sustainable service and to avoid replicating services and support already provided.
 - **Respect:** Respecting and learning from national and local institutions and systems, including supporting their agendas and work plans, and considering their priorities.
 - **Service:** Providing support to, and sharing expertise with the communities in our region that request our assistance. RACS Global Health could not operate without the significant contribution of time and expertise of its volunteers.
 - **Integrity:** Commitment to being honest, transparent and accountable in everything we do.
 - **Compassion:** Compassion for those communities that lack access to surgical care and whose members suffer high rates of avoidable death, disability, or correctable deformity.
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Context

RACS is a non-profit organisation training surgeons and maintaining surgical standards in Australia and New Zealand. The primary purpose of the College is to provide education, training and research in the practice of surgery and be a unifying force for surgery in the region. As part of its objective, the College facilitates medical education and clinical support in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific through the RACS Global Health Program, to improve health outcomes for people in those communities.

Surgically treatable diseases and injuries are among the top 15 causes of disability, yet 5 billion of the world's population do not have access to emergency and essential surgical care, and the poorest third of the world's population receive only 6% of all surgical operations.

Emergency and essential surgery are vital components of universal health coverage. Timely access to surgical care saves lives, reduces disability and can correct deformity.

Treatment of many surgical conditions does not necessarily require complex surgical skills or equipment. With access to appropriately trained health professionals, safe surgery and anaesthesia can be delivered cost-effectively in low and middle income countries.

RACS recognises that there is a shortage of trained and skilled national specialists and appropriate supporting infrastructure in many developing countries in the region. This shortage reduces the countries' capacity to deliver surgical and medical care to their populations. Ill health and disability are a key cause of poverty, whilst poor people are often disproportionately affected by ill health and disability.

RACS Global Health provides specialist medical education, training, capacity development and medical aid. 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 national health services and training institutions in the region.

We partner with national and international medical and surgical colleges and associations to promote international surgical interchange for the mutual benefit of the surgical communities of Australia and New Zealand, and other countries in the region.

Visiting clinical teams include Fellows from a range of Specialist Medical Colleges and other health care specialties including nursing, physiotherapy and optometry. Program activities are focused on the sustainable delivery of services and training that increases local capacity. We work with national governments, civil societies and non-government organisations to identify and address priorities based on national health and development plans. Activities are aligned with the strategies of in-country governments and partner institutions to strengthen local systems and institutions.

Our Plan

Strategic Goals and Objectives

1.0

Successfully advocate for the inclusion of safe, affordable surgical and anaesthesia care in national health plans

Objectives:

- a) Collaborate with professional health organisations and academic institutions to promote a unified voice for global surgery
- b) Support surgical communities to advocate to their governments for resources to improve access to safe surgery and anaesthesia for their countries
- c) Support ministries of health to incorporate safe surgery and anaesthesia services into their national health plans.

2.0

Support capacity building and sustainable workforce development by:

2.1 Supporting local leadership development

Objectives:

- a) Mentor identified health personnel to become surgical leaders in the countries
- b) Share our expertise in training, professionalism and standards
- c) Provide scholarships and travel grants for health professionals to support their professional development

2.2. Supporting the implementation of in-country education programs

Objectives:

- a) Support partner governments in low- and middle-income countries in which we work to set up and strengthen national medical training programs, aligned with their needs
- b) Work with national and regional organisations and governments, in-country partners and specialist medical colleges to design, implement and evaluate education activities
- c) Provide expert medical personnel and share training resources to facilitate the implementation of education programs appropriate to the country context.

2.3. Promoting surgical standards and professionalism

Objectives:

- a) Encourage surgical audits, safe surgical practice and sustainable emergency cover through education and role modelling

2.4. Promoting surgical standards and professionalism

Objectives:

- a) Ensure skills acquisition for local personnel is a primary component in our response to requests from partner governments for clinical services support.

3.0

Develop and sustain strong partnerships with international surgical bodies and Asia Pacific partners.

Objectives:

- a) Foster the longstanding collegiate relationships with international surgical colleges in the region and engage with emerging surgical societies and associations for the mutual benefit of our surgical communities
- b) Participate at Asia-Pacific surgical conferences and encourage participation of Asia-Pacific surgical college representatives at RACS Global Health events to build networks and strengthen relationships
- c) Respond to opportunities presented by the increasing number of International Medical Graduates in Australia and New Zealand and the opportunities for engagement through existing links with their home countries.
- d) Collaborate with professional health organisations and academic institutions in Australia and New Zealand, and places where global health activities are delivered to improve cooperation and coordination in global health work.

All Program activities strive to be inclusive of people with a disability, impartial and neutral in relation to gender, ethnicity, religion, politics, sexual orientation and other personal characteristics.

The RACS Global Health Program Strategic Plan 2017-2021 supports the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons' Strategic Plan.
