



LET'S OPERATE WITH RESPECT



Health  
Murrumbidgee  
Local Health District

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Murrumbidgee LHD signs RACS Respect Agreement

Tuesday 13 December 2016

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at building respect and improving patient safety in surgery will be signed between the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) and the Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) in Wagga Wagga tomorrow **Wednesday 14 December**.

The agreement, a collaboration under the RACS 2015 Action Plan: *Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety*, commits both organisations to a shared vision of providing high quality training, education and experience in the practice of surgery.

MLHD has a shared interest with RACS to deal with issues of discrimination, bullying, and sexual harassment (DBSH) to ensure a safe learning and working environment. RACS and MLHD will work together in addressing these issues.

RACS Vice President Spencer Beasley said the College strongly supported MLHD's efforts.

"RACS and MLHD are firm believers in the rights of all healthcare professionals to a safe training and work environment where they can realise their full potential," Professor Beasley said.

"We know that if we can improve the culture of medicine, and surgery in particular, we can expect better patient outcomes. This is a powerful reason why we wish to work together with this initiative."

MLHD Board Chair Gayle Murphy said that the agreement would strengthen the hospital's initiatives to improve patient safety and overall workplace culture.

"Under the agreement, we will further explore methods to mutually support each other in activities that promote respect, and counter discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment in the practice of surgery, to improve patient safety," Ms Murphy said.

Specific initiatives include:

- Collaborating on the development of programs and processes to deal with DBSH in the workplace
- Sharing relevant information and resources regarding the education and training available with the respective institutions
- Supporting greater diversity within the surgical profession.
- Working together to ensure that surgeons and Trainees are able to undertake required training and education in relation to DBSH, including in relation to clinical training supervision, skills courses and general courses.

**Media note:** Media are invited to the MoU signing at 11.30am Wednesday 14 December at the Wagga Wagga Rural Referral Hospital staff cafeteria. Please meet in the hospital entry foyer.



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### **About 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 7,000 surgeons and 1,300 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](http://www.surgeons.org)

### **About Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD)**

MLHD is responsible for the operation of public hospital and health institutions and provide health services to communities within its geographical area. The District provides services across more than 125,000 square kilometres and 241,000 people live in the region. Its primary purpose is to provide relief to sick and injured people through the provision of care and treatments and promote, protect and maintain the health of the community.

### **Media inquiries:**

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