

Division	Fellowship Engagement	Ref. No.	POL-3132
Department	Global Health		
Title	Medical Equipment and Consumables Donations		

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy governs the management of medical equipment and consumable donations provision to RACS (Royal Australasian College of Surgeons) Global Health Department and RACS Global Health Programs.

Medical equipment and consumable donations are strictly managed to ensure they are quality, appropriate and formalised donations to countries across the Indo-Pacific region. All donations of equipment must be accompanied by a formal request from the Ministry of Health of the recipient host country and align with the principles of RACS Global Health programs. RACS Global Health reserves the right to refuse and return donations to the supplier at their cost if they do not comply with this policy.

This policy does not extend to procurement of equipment purchased through existing RACS Global Health programs and related institutional grants.

2. KEYWORDS

Donations, Medical Equipment, In-Kind Donations, World Health Organisation (WHO)

3. BODY OF POLICY

3.1 Background

The RACS Global Health Program works with host country Ministries of Health and the Australian Government to provide specialist medical and surgical programs to the Indo-Pacific region. RACS Global Health aligns its principles of medical equipment donation acceptance with national country and WHO guidelines. This is necessary to ensure donations achieve their intended objectives and do not inadvertently burden the recipient health care system.

RACS acknowledges that health sectors of many developing countries rely significantly on donations of medical devices, medical equipment, and consumables. Although these donations are made with good intentions, the outcomes are not always positive if the donations are not thoughtfully planned and coordinated.

3.2 Donations

The College may accept donations in-kind of medical equipment or materials and supplies. The donations must meet WHO donation guidelines and/or national country guidelines and principles of good practice to be accepted.

3.2.1 Core Principles of RACS Global Health Medical Equipment and Consumables Donations¹

- Donation is intended to assist the recipient. Donations should not be sent unless they have been formally requested by the Ministry of Health. Donations should be based on an expressed need. Donor-initiated donations where the recipients'

¹ 2018 Fiji Ministry of Health Guidelines for donations of medicines, medical supply and equipment <https://www.health.gov.fj/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Guidelines-for-Donations-of-Medicines-Medical-Supplies-and-Equipment.pdf>

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advice has not been sought are unhelpful. Requests from individual host country recipient clinicians do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry of Health and will not be accepted.

- Donations must support essential medicines policies and medical systems. Respect must be given for the authority of the recipient and the receiving country's administrative arrangements including national standard treatment guidelines and essential medicines lists and equipment policies.
- There should be no double standards. If the quality of an item is not acceptable in the country of origin, it is unacceptable as a donation. Medicines and consumables should have 18 months remaining shelf-life on arrival at the destination. Equipment that cannot be used or repaired in the country of origin is unlikely to be helpful in the recipient country and the collection and redistribution of patients' unused medicines is not permitted.
- In most cases a financial contribution is more appropriate than donations in-kind. It allows the recipient to prioritise needs and goods can often be accessed locally or from appropriate procuring agencies at a fraction of the cost of their transport from another country.

3.2.2 The College supports donations of medical equipment (patient interacting instruments, appliances, modules, or systems) that meet the following criteria²:

- the equipment is requested by the recipient country with provision of a formal document and letter of request that is filed in Global Health program systems
- the recipient country nominates a focal point staff member in-country responsible for receipt, maintenance, and management of the donated equipment
- the equipment is technologically appropriate and able to be used by the requesting country
- the equipment is in working condition and accompanied by accessories and attachments are included for immediate operation
- the equipment has an operation and service manual which is available in English and there is a dedicated plan for training and maintenance of the donation
- there is funding available from the donor that can be used to freight the equipment to the final recipient, and/or consider maintenance of the donation
- all medicine or consumable supplies are safe for use and have a remaining shelf life of 18 months on arrival at destination
- donations of non-electrical equipment (instruments, beds, drip stands, stainless steel trolleys, overbed tables, bassinets etc.) in sound working order
- the recipient institution shall confirm in the letter of receipt that it releases the College from any further responsibility for the equipment once it is received.

3.3 Refusal and disposal of donations of medical equipment

RACS reserves the right to refuse and return unsolicited donations of medical equipment and consumables that do not meet the criteria expressed in **3.2.1**. In the event where return of donations is more costly than disposal RACS reserves the right to dispose without consent of the agency that donated the goods. In such cases RACS Global Health will try to contact the relevant donor to inform that the goods will be disposed of or can be dispatched back to donor at their own cost.

² 2020

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3.4 Emergencies

The College adheres to the advice maintained by the WHO regarding donations of medical equipment in emergencies. The WHO advises that capital equipment should not be donated in emergency situations, unless it is established that the emergency will continue over a long period.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Medical device donations: considerations for solicitation and provision (*World Health Organisation, June 2011*)

Guidelines for Donations of Medicines, Medical Supplies and Equipment to the Republic of Fiji (*Ministry of Health Republic of Fiji Island October 2016*)

Approver **International Engagement Committee**
Authoriser **Council**