



Surgeons want more Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori specialists

Monday 2 May, 2016

Two Aboriginal medical students and four Māori junior doctors interested in surgical training are in Brisbane this week as guests of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) for their Annual Scientific Congress.

These prospective surgical Trainees have been invited by the College to participate in the Congress educational program, network with Fellows and other professionals involved in surgery, and visit local Aboriginal health services.

They will meet with RACS leaders this week at the Indigenous Doctors' Breakfast to share their views on leadership career pathways for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori medical professionals.

Kersandra Begley is a final year medical student at the University of Sydney. Ms Begley is currently the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association Student Director and has been actively engaged working in indigenous health with placements in Narromine, Orange, Alice Springs, Tennant Creek Townsville and Sydney.

Claudia Paul is a final year medical student at the University of Adelaide. She is passionate about Indigenous health, surgery and active in mentoring younger medical students. Ms Paul has worked in health promotion and intends to focus on improving cultural communication programs in particular.

Dr Zanazir Alexander is a doctor at Middlemore Hospital in Auckland with a passion for orthopaedic surgery and research. Dr Alexander hopes to assist in bridging the gap in Māori health disparities by pursuing a career in surgery as well as inspiring others to consider a career in health.

Dr Jaclyn Aramoana-Arlidge is a doctor at North Shore Hospital in Auckland. Dr Aramoana-Arlidge is interested in general surgery as well as research and has a focus on improving the retention rates of Māori medical students and creating culturally appropriate systems and processes for patients.

Dr Joshua Knudsen is a doctor with the Hawke's Bay DHB in Hastings. Dr Knudsen is committed to improving health care for Māori and Islander patients who feel they have been previously let down by the health care system. Dr Knudsen is active in arthroscopy research and has published a number of relevant articles.

Dr Kopa Manahi is a doctor at Hawke's Bay Fallen Soldiers' Memorial Hospital in Hastings. Dr Manahi aspires to train as a general surgeon to enable him to provide both clinical services to the community as well as continuing to act as an educational role model.

Their attendance has been made possible by travel bursaries sponsored by the RACS Foundation for Surgery, which is part of a suite of strategies identified by the College to maximise the success of Indigenous doctors progressing into surgical training.

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