



LET'S OPERATE WITH RESPECT

MEDIA RELEASE

Nelson Marlborough Health follows suit with RACS Respect Agreement

24 November 2016

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at building respect and improving patient safety in surgery has been signed between the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) and Nelson Marlborough Health (NMH).

The MoU, a collaboration formed under the RACS 2015 Action Plan: *Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety*, commits both organisations to a shared vision to provide high quality training, education and experience in the practice of surgery and is the second to be signed in New Zealand, following an agreement struck with the University of Otago last month.

RACS and NMH will work together to ensure that surgical supervisors have the necessary skills and attributes and are supported to provide training, assessment, feedback and support to Trainees and International Medical Graduates free of discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment.

RACS Vice-President Professor Spencer Beasley said the College strongly supported NMH's efforts.

"RACS and NMH strongly support the rights of all healthcare professionals to a safe training and work environment where they can realise their full potential," he 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."

Acting NMH Chief Executive Officer Peter Bramley says that the agreement will strengthen Nelson Marlborough Health's initiatives to improve patient safety and its overall workplace culture.

"Under the agreement, we will further develop programs and processes to address inappropriate staff behaviour across our hospitals, as well as aligning existing policies and processes to deal with these concerns," Mr Bramley said.

Specific initiatives include:

- Sharing relevant information and resources regarding the education and training available with the respective institutions
- Exploring models for less than full-time training for surgical trainees and to promote these to allow greater flexibility and fulfilment of family commitments



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- Ensuring that surgeons and Trainees are able to undertake required training and education in relation to DBSH
- Developing and agreeing on a joint protocol to establish relevant complaints management criteria.

In May 2016, RACS launched Let's Operate with Respect – a campaign to help deal effectively with DBSH in surgery. Further information can be found on a dedicated new section on the RACS website called About Respect.

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

About Nelson Marlborough Health

Nelson Marlborough Health is a district health board and the main provider and funder of health services across the top of New Zealand's South Island.

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