Dear Sir/Madam,

It is very disappointing and quite appalling that recent media reports have suggested that it is preferable for female surgical trainees to silently endure sexual harassment. The College of Surgeons refutes this advice emphatically. The inference is that this is what successful female surgeons and trainees have done in the past and this is deeply insulting.

Unfortunately, instances of sexual harassment and indeed bullying in general occur in society, but encouraging non-reporting serves only to perpetuate it. The College of Surgeons is active in addressing harassment and bullying. It is reflected in our Code of Conduct, in our policies and our educational processes and courses. Complaints are taken seriously and investigated and acted upon at the highest level. The College works actively with hospitals across Australia and New Zealand to ensure there is a safe educational and working environment for surgical trainees and surgeons. To contend that reporting will impact on one’s career advancement is simply wrong and ill-informed.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Grigg