MEDIA RELEASE

RACS signs another respect agreement

13 February 2017

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at building respect and improving patient safety in surgery has just been signed between the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) and the Children’s Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service (CHQHHS).

The Agreement, a collaboration formed under the College’s 2015 Action Plan: Building Respect, Improving Patient Safety, is the latest agreement across Australia and New Zealand aimed at addressing discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment (DBSH) across the health sector.

Together, RACS and the CHQHHS will work to ensure that surgical supervisors have the necessary skills and attributes and are supported to provide training, assessment, feedback and support to trainees and IMGs free from discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment.

RACS President Mr Phil Truskett said that the College and CHQHHS had a shared commitment to providing high quality training, education and experience in the practice of surgery; one that was underpinned by the shared values of integrity and respect.

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

CHQ Chief Executive Fionnagh Dougan said CHQ was committed to building an inclusive culture, in collaboration with the College.

“We are committed supporting our workforce through a range of initiatives. This includes embedding our values of respect, integrity, care and imagination throughout our organisation.

“We are also implementing a staff education campaign so people know where to access support, as well as an employee wellbeing framework and mentally healthy workplace action plan.

“We know that a safe and respectful working environment is not only important for the health and wellbeing of our staff, but is also essential for the patients and families in our care,” she said.

Specific initiatives include:

- Exploring avenues to share information about complaints management and outcomes
- Co-branding on awareness and educational initiatives
- Aligning policies and processes where possible, to deal with these issues
- Exploring ways to make flexible work arrangements more accessible for Trainees and Surgeons
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- providing resources to support those affected by DBSH.

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 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 Children’s Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service
Children’s Health Queensland (CHQ) is a specialist statewide hospital and health service dedicated to caring for children and young people from across Queensland and northern New South Wales. CHQ is committed to collaborating with all of healthcare partners, most importantly families, to ensure the consistent delivery of safe, high-quality patient and family-centred care. A recognised leader in paediatric healthcare, education and research, CHQ delivers a full range of clinical services, tertiary level care and health promotion programs.

CHQ provides an integrated network of services through:

- The Lady Cilento Children’s Hospital
- The Child and Youth Community Health Service
- The Child and Youth Mental Health Service
- Statewide services and programs, including specialist outreach and telehealth services
- Partnerships with other hospital and health services and non-government organisations

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