MEDIA RELEASE

Aspiring Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori specialists attend RACS ASC

Tuesday 9 May, 2017

Two Aboriginal medical students and four Māori medical student/doctors with an interest in surgical training are in Adelaide this week as guests at the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) Annual Scientific Congress.

These prospective Surgical Trainees have been invited by RACS to participate in the Congress educational program, meet with Fellows and other professionals involved in surgery, and visit a local Aboriginal health service.

They will be involved in the annual Indigenous Doctors’ Breakfast, where they will have the opportunity to discuss and contribute to conversations on leadership career pathways for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori medical professionals.

**Justin Cain** is a final year medical student at the University of Wollongong with an interest in cardiothoracic and trauma surgery. He has served as the Indigenous Health Officer with the National Rural Health Students Network (NRHSN) and served as a board member for Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA). In these roles he contributed to the development of policy to improve Indigenous health education.

**Natalie Pink** is a final year medical student at Flinders University in Adelaide. Natalie previously worked in the emergency services as a paramedic, is interested in burns management and is considering plastic surgery as a specialist career. She has worked with the Inspire mentoring camps that enable high school students to spend some time with Elders and encourage students to lead a healthy lifestyle and provide information on future pathways.

**Cheyenne Heka** is a final year medical student at the University of Otago NZ. She has been involved in student mentoring programmes such as the Ka-Rikarika-A-Tane programme at Otago University, as well as teaching Te Reo Māori during her undergraduate years. Cheyenne has also undertaken a number of summer studentships, one involving the creation of an App for health professionals to learn clinically-useful Māori language and phrases.

**Dr Lance Buckthought** is a resident doctor at Wellington Hospital NZ and has a strong interest in Plastic and Otolaryngology Surgery. His paper on ‘Infiltrating Syringomatous Adenoma: A diagnostic challenge in breast surgery’ has been accepted for poster presentation at the ASC. He is a past Tumuaki (president) of Te Oranga, Māori Medical Students Association.

**Dr Moea Nimmo** is a first year house officer at Palmerston North Hospital NZ, with an interest in General Surgery. She was active in the Gardens4Health campaign, set by the CMDHB, Lets Beat Diabetes campaign and a project with the University Of Auckland - Department Of Population Health. Dr Nimmo has also assisted in a research study which looked at the incidence of middle ear disease amongst Counties Manukau 2-4 year olds.

**Dr Natasha Martin** is a NZ intern currently at Adelaide’s Lyell McEwen Hospital. Natasha is a member of an upper gastro-intestinal team and later this year will be undertaking a surgical rotation. Natasha has served as a Board Member of Te ORA Māori Medical Practitioners Association and Tumuaki (President) of Te Oranga, Māori Medical Students Association. Her contributions to Māori Health have been acknowledged both nationally and internationally through the Vera Keefe Ormsby Prize.

Media inquiries: Greg Meyer, Manager Communications & Advocacy
t: +61 3 9249 1263 | m: +61 429 028 933
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The attendance of these future surgeons has been made possible by travel bursaries, sponsored by the RACS Foundation for Surgery, which are part of a range of strategies being implemented by RACS to support Indigenous doctors progressing into surgical training.

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 7000 surgeons and 1300 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.

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