

RACS Wellbeing Action Plan

2022-2026



RACS WELLBEING ACTION PLAN

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Priority	Action
Leadership Provide leadership to promote culture and systems that support surgeon wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Champion compassionate leadership at every level that demonstrates inclusiveness, empathy, understanding and kindness to support teams and enhance patient care.• Encourage surgeons to model behaviors that promote positive mental and physical health.• Support the implementation of existing RACS strategies, action plans and advocacy that improve physical and psychological safety in the workplace:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Building Respect and Improving Patient Safety Action Plan (includes action on cultural competence and safety, racism and microaggressions, in addition to bullying and harassment)- Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan- Rural Health Equity Strategic Action Plan- Women in Surgery Strategic Plan- Indigenous Health Strategies• Support the development of future RACS strategies, action plans and advocacy that contribute to improved physical and psychological safety in the workplace.• Engage senior leaders to promote and normalise seeking help (e.g. sharing personal stories, reflections and individual strategies) to reduce stigma associated with mental ill-health.• Assess the feasibility of a Wellbeing Champion or Advocate Program via RACS States, Territories and the Aotearoa New Zealand Committees (pro bono role - advocacy, connection and referral to support options).• Review the Wellbeing Charter for Doctors through a consultation process with endorsing organisations and other key stakeholders (due 2023).• Advocate for wellbeing to be standing agenda item on RACS committees, to ensure wellbeing is prioritised and incorporated into College standing business.
Education Provide Fellows, Trainees and Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMGs) with the knowledge and skills to support, encourage and sustain a safe working environment for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand the current wellbeing educational offerings to address challenges across stages of a surgical career, including collaboration with external education providers.• Actively promote the Surgeon Wellbeing eLearning module to Trainees, SIMGs and Fellows as an introduction to wellbeing.• Promote education and resources that equip surgeons to identify and respond to colleagues who have or are at risk of experiencing mental ill health.• Promote initiatives that offer connection e.g. local peer support, mentoring and debriefing.• Collaborate with RACSTA to recommend tailored actions that support the wellbeing of Trainees and junior doctors that encounter setbacks during their surgical career.



Priority	Action
<p>Standards</p> <p>Strengthen health and wellbeing in the RACS training curriculum and the CPD Program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure wellbeing is addressed in the RACS Professional Skills Curriculum (for Trainees and SIMGs) and the Surgical Competence and Performance Guide (for Fellows). • Ensure the RACS Hospital Training Post Accreditation Standards for Surgical Education and Training defines standards and accountability to provide support and proactively address the wellbeing of Trainees. • Increase the wellbeing offerings approved in the RACS Continuing Professional Development Program, including externally delivered or co-badged education and events. • Contribute to the review of the RACS Standards for Safe Hours.
<p>Research</p> <p>Foster research to better understand the needs and wellbeing status and of Fellows, Trainees and SIMGs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote opportunities to monitor, research and evaluate the wellbeing and needs of Fellows, Trainees and SIMGs across various stages of the surgical career.
<p>Advocacy</p> <p>Advocate on key wellbeing issues that promote a shared responsibility for doctors' wellbeing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a strong voice on doctors' wellbeing issues to institutions, governments and policy makers (e.g. safe hours, mandatory reporting, respectful workplaces, excessive workloads, portability of trainee leave, sustainability). • Develop biennial Wellbeing Awards to recognise local initiatives that advance doctor wellbeing to showcase to RACS Trainees, SIMGs and Fellows and inspire action. • Refresh the RACS Surgeon Wellbeing webpage, resources and support options to improve access and currency of resources. • Promote wellbeing focused events (CrazySocks4Docs Day, RU OK? Day, Wellness Week, Pride Month etc). • Support the Younger Fellows Committee, Senior Surgeon Section and other interest groups to establish a Career Transitions Hub to provide resources and support options different career stages. • Publish an annual wellbeing themed edition of <i>Surgical News</i>. • Increase promotion of the RACS Support Program (delivered by Converge International) to improve awareness and utilisation of the confidential psychological support service. • Encourage institutions to regularly measure the wellbeing of doctors using validated tools (e.g. the Wellbeing Index) for targeted action. • Engage with universities to seek alignment on doctor wellbeing in medical curricula, acknowledging that students will be equipped with wellbeing support options prior to entering specialist training.