



Royal Australasian
College of Surgeons

FINAL PROGRAM

Developing a Career and skills in Academic Surgery (DCAS) Course

with **Keynote Presenter**
Professor Mark Smithers

Monday 2 May 2022
Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre
Brisbane, Queensland



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Organising Committee

DCAS Co-Chairs

Associate Professor Jonathan Karpelowsky

RACS Section for Academic Surgery

Dr Colin Martin

Association for Academic Surgery

Committee Members

Dr Richard Hanney

Course Convener

Dr Marc Gladman

Chair, RACS Section for Academic Surgery

Laure Taher Mansour

Australasian Students' Surgical Association Representative

Associate Professor Wendy Babidge

General Manager, RACS Research, Audit and Academic Surgery

Dr Lorwai Tan

Manager, RACS Section of Academic Surgery

General Information

Intention to Photograph

Please be advised that photographs may be taken during the course and reproduced by the course organiser. These photographs may be used for the following purposes:

- Projection onsite
- Reporting on the course in online and hard copy publications
- Marketing a future course, including online and hard copy publications

If you do not wish to be included in a photograph, please advise the photographer.

Developing a Career and skills in Academic Surgery (DCAS) Course

Final Program

Monday 2 May 2022

6:15AM | REGISTRATIONS OPEN

*Light breakfast served
Plaza Level Foyer*

7:15AM | WELCOME

*Sally Langley (President, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons)
Meeting Room P3, Plaza Level*

7:20AM | INTRODUCTION

*Jonathan Karpelowsky (New South Wales) and Colin Martin (Alabama, USA)
Meeting Room P3, Plaza Level*

7:30AM | SESSION 1: A CAREER IN ACADEMIC SURGERY

*Chairs: Colin Martin (Alabama, USA) and Julian Smith (Victoria)
Meeting Room P3, Plaza Level*

- 7:30am Why every surgeon can and should be an academic surgeon
Christobel Saunders (Victoria)
- 7:50am Where do good ideas and research questions come from and where do I begin?
Andrew Hill (Aotearoa New Zealand)
- 8:10am A productive mentor and mentee relationship - What's needed?
Callisia Clarke (Wisconsin, USA)
- 8:30am How to supervise a surgical higher degree and get it done on time
Marc Gladman (South Australia)
- 8:50am Panel discussion

9:10AM | MORNING TEA WITH THE FACULTY

Plaza Level Foyer

9:30AM | SESSION 2: NEW DIRECTIONS AND CHALLENGES IN SURGICAL ACADEMIA

*Chairs: Amir Ghaferi (Michigan, USA) and Michelle Locke (Aotearoa New Zealand)
Meeting Room P3, Plaza Level*

- 9:30am Research in Indigenous or vulnerable communities - Where to begin (update)
Kelvin Kong (New South Wales)
- 9:50am Beyond the impact factor - Social media and open source options in academic surgery:
Pitfalls and benefits
Colin Martin (Alabama, USA)
- 10:10am Choosing your journal and avoiding pitfalls
Juliet Emamaullee (California, USA)

10:30AM | HOT TOPIC IN ACADEMIC SURGERY

*Chair: Ruth Mitchell (New South Wales)
Meeting Room P3, Plaza Level*

- 10:30am Introduction
Ruth Mitchell (New South Wales)
- 10:35am Burnout and mental health in academic medicine
Eric Levi (Victoria)

11:00AM | MID-MORNING BREAK WITH THE FACULTY

Plaza Level Foyer

Final Program

Cont'd

- 11:20am Preparing an abstract
Shipra Arya (California, USA)
- 11:40am Presenting at a scientific meeting
Christina Roland (Texas, USA)
- 12:00pm Writing and submitting a manuscript
Amir Ghaferi (Michigan, USA)
- 12:20pm Panel discussion

12:40PM | KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Chair: Richard Hanney (New South Wales)
Meeting Room P3, Plaza Level

- 12:40pm Introduction
Richard Hanney (New South Wales)
- 12:45pm Reflections on building and maintaining an academic career
Mark Smithers (Queensland)

1:25PM | LUNCH WITH THE FACULTY

Plaza Level Foyer

2:25PM | SESSION 4: CONCURRENT ACADEMIC WORKSHOPS

CONCURRENT WORKSHOP 1: FINDING MY FIT

Chairs: Tamara Glyn (Aotearoa New Zealand) and Christina Roland (Texas, USA)
Meeting Room P3, Plaza Level

- 2:25pm Translational research - Bedside to bench to bedside
Anthony Glover (New South Wales)
- 2:40pm Clinical research - Cohort studies, collaboration and trials
Deborah Wright (Aotearoa New Zealand)
- 2:55pm Interdisciplinary research
Payal Mukherjee (New South Wales)
- 3:10pm Panel discussion

CONCURRENT WORKSHOP 2: SURGICAL RESEARCH FUNDING

Chairs: Shipra Arya (California, USA) and Nichola Wilson (Aotearoa New Zealand)
Meeting Room P4, Plaza Level

- 2:25pm A recipe for successful grant writing
Greg O'Grady (Aotearoa New Zealand)
- 2:40pm Targeting surgical research funding: Philanthropy, NGO's, societies, MRFF and NHMRC - Where is best?
Claudia Di Bella (Victoria)
- 2:55pm Looking for the big prize - MRFF and NHMRC - Strategies for success
David Watson (South Australia)
- 3:10pm Panel discussion

3:30PM | CLOSING SESSION

Chairs: Juliet Emamaullee (California, USA) and Toby Richards (Western Australia)
Meeting Room P3, Plaza Level

- 3:30pm The far and wide of an academic career
Ian Bissett (Aotearoa New Zealand)
- 3:50pm Closing remarks
Jonathan Karpelowsky (New South Wales) and Colin Martin (Alabama, USA)

Keynote Presenter



Mark Smithers
Queensland

Graduated, University of Queensland, 1977. Mayne Professor, Head, Academy of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, University of Queensland. Director, Upper Gastro-intestinal and Soft Tissue Unit, Princess Alexandra Hospital. Past

Chair, Section of Academic Surgery, RACS. Committee member, Queensland Cancer Control Safety and Quality Partnership. Medical Director, Melanoma Patients Australia.

Chairman, Queensland Melanoma Project. Investigator on single centre and multi-centred, prospective studies assessing the epidemiology and management of melanoma. Recent clinical research: assessment of outcomes of treatment in patients with high-risk primary melanoma; outcomes related to regional lymph node surgery; patients with in-transit disease and adjuvant therapy trials for patients with stage III disease.

Past President, Australia and New Zealand Gastric and Oesophageal Surgeons Association. Member, Executive Committee, International Gastric Cancer Association. Active involvement with the establishment of minimally invasive approaches for benign and malignant disease in upper GI surgery. Investigator in Phase II and III trials assessing the role of neoadjuvant therapies for patients having surgery for oesophageal and gastric cancer. Elected Honorary Fellow American Surgical Association. Author on 220 peer-reviewed publications; present and previous editorial board appointments to ANZ Journal of Surgery, World Journal of Surgery and the British Journal of Surgery. Multiple presentations and named lectures to national and international conferences.

Hot Topic in Academic Surgery Presenter



Eric Levi
Victoria

Eric is a Paediatric and Adult Otolaryngologist Head and Neck Surgeon with an interest in paediatric airway reconstruction, head and neck tumour, vascular anomalies, surgical education and clinician wellbeing. He is

based at the Royal Children's Hospital and St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne, and has undergone subspecialty Fellowship training in Canada, Brisbane and Auckland. He is an honorary Fellow at Murdoch Children's Research Institute, a member of the Surgeon Wellbeing working group at RACS and has been a regular advisor and author on matters concerning doctor wellbeing.

Association for Academic Surgery Speakers and International Faculty



Shipra Arya
California, USA

Dr Arya is the Chief of the Vascular Section at the Palo Alto Veterans Affairs (VA) Healthcare System and an Associate Professor of Surgery at the Stanford University School of Medicine. She has a Master's degree in epidemiology

from the Harvard School of Public Health focused on research methodology and cardiovascular epidemiology. She completed her General Surgery Residency at Creighton University Medical Center followed by a Vascular Surgery Fellowship at University of Michigan.

Her health services research lab focuses on how novel risk predictors can be used to guide improvements in patient centered outcomes and healthcare value, especially for older adults. Her accumulated research points to frailty as a versatile tool that can guide surgical decision making, inform patient consent and design quality improvement initiatives at the patient and hospital level. Her previous work includes the development and validation of the Risk Analysis Index (RAI), a surgical frailty screening tool. The field of frailty research in surgical population is still relatively nascent and her current work focuses on streamlining frailty evaluation, and implementation of patient and system level interventions to improve surgical outcomes and enhance patient centered care.

She has been funded by the NIH/NIA GEMSTAR grant, the American Heart Association (AHA) as well as the American Geriatrics Society. She is also a site PI for multiple national trials including CREST-2 (Carotid Revascularization and Medical Management for Asymptomatic Carotid Stenosis), CSP 599 TOP (Transfusions after operations in high cardiac risk patients) and PROVE-AAA (Preferences for Open Vs. Endovascular Repair for Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm). She is also a co-investigator for the Million Veterans Program to study genome-wide associations in peripheral vascular conditions.



Callisia Clarke
Wisconsin, USA

Dr Callisia N Clarke completed her medical degree at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine where she was elected to the Alpha Omega Alpha Honors Society. She completed a General Surgery residency at

the University of Cincinnati Medical Center in Cincinnati, Ohio in 2013 and a Fellowship in Complex General Surgical Oncology at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in 2016. She joined the faculty at the Medical College of Wisconsin in 2016 as an Assistant Professor of Surgery in the Division of Surgical Oncology with a clinical practice focused on neuroendocrine tumors (NETs) of the pancreas and GI tract, melanoma, and sarcoma. Her academic and research efforts are centered on epigenetic regulation of neuroendocrine tumors and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Academic Surgery. Dr Clarke holds numerous leadership positions in national organizations including the American Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association, the Association for Academic Surgery, the North American Neuroendocrine Tumor Society, and the Society of Surgical Oncology.

Association for Academic Surgery Speakers and International Faculty Cont'd



Juliet Emamaullee
 California, USA

Dr Juliet Emamaullee is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Surgery at the USC Keck School of Medicine and an attending transplant surgeon at Keck Hospital of USC and Children's Hospital-Los Angeles. She is also the Associate

Chief, Division of Clinical Research, USC Department of Surgery, where she helps oversee more than 70 clinical trials. She is a surgeon-scientist with an NIH-funded translational immunology lab, exploring immunological phenotypes associated with liver transplant recipients. Dr Emamaullee's other research interests include living donor liver transplantation, disparities in access to liver transplant, Fontan-associated liver disease, and tolerance strategies to improve allograft survival.

Dr Emamaullee received her B.Sc. in Chemistry in 2000 from the University of Alabama and then completed her Ph.D. in Immunology (2005) and M.D. (2010) at the University of Alberta. Dr Emamaullee completed her residency in General Surgery at Emory University in 2015. She returned to the University of Alberta for Fellowship training in Transplant and Hepatobiliary Surgery and then joined the faculty of USC upon completion, in the Fall of 2017.

Dr Emamaullee holds leadership roles in several surgical societies including the American College of Surgeons, American Society of Transplant Surgeons, American Society of Transplantation, and Association for Academic Surgery. She serves as Chair of the North American Living Liver Donation Innovation Group and is on the Steering Committee for the UNOS Liver Paired Exchange Pilot Program.

She has over 90 peer-reviewed publications, has received more than 50 awards, and has over \$2 million in extramural funding including a National Cancer Institute K08 Award.



Amir Ghaferi
 Michigan, USA

Dr Ghaferi is the Moses Gunn, M.D. Professor of Surgery at the University of Michigan and Vice Chair for Strategy and Finance the Department of Surgery. He is the Director for Ambulatory Surgery in the University of Michigan

Medical Group where he oversees clinical operations, quality, strategy, and finance for Michigan Medicine ambulatory surgery centers. He is also the Director of the Michigan Bariatric Surgery Collaborative, a consortium of 40 hospitals and 80 surgeons focused on improving the safety and quality of Bariatric Surgery. He received his Bachelors degree from UCLA, his medical degree from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, and completed his surgical training at the University of Michigan. Dr Ghaferi also completed advanced training in health services research and obtained a Masters degree in Health and Healthcare Research from the University of Michigan.

Dr Ghaferi's research focuses on understanding the relationship of organizational systems and design to quality and efficiency, with the ultimate goal of designing interventions to improve care locally, regionally, and nationally. Dr Ghaferi has received research funding from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). His research has been published in prominent journals such as The New England

Journal of Medicine, JAMA, Health Affairs, and the British Medical Journal. He also serves on the editor board of several prominent journals including JAMA Surgery and is Associate Editor of GI Surgery for the Journal of Surgical Research.

Dr Ghaferi is an active member of several national societies (Association for Academic Surgery, Society of University Surgeons, AcademyHealth, Surgical Outcomes Club) and serves on, chairs, or co-chairs several national committees. He is the Immediate Past-President of the Surgical Outcomes Club – the largest surgical health services research group in the world. He is past-President of the Association for Academic Surgery – the largest academic surgical association in the US. Dr Ghaferi is passionate about inspiring and developing academic surgeons across the US and beyond. He served as the the co-convenor of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons Developing a Career in Academic Surgery annual course from 2015-2020.



Colin Martin
 Alabama, USA

Colin A. Martin is an Associate Professor of Surgery and Vice Chair for Diversity Equity and Inclusion at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). He completed his General Surgery training at the University of Cincinnati

and Pediatric Surgery training at Vanderbilt University. He then joined the faculty at UAB in 2012. Dr Martin has a traditional clinical practice with a specific interest in patients with intestinal failure. To compliment his clinical interests, he has developed a basic science research program. The long-term goal of his research program is to define the mechanisms of how environmental psychological stress during pregnancy affects intestinal immune dysfunction and injury in newborns. Dr Martin's research program has been funded by the National Institutes of Health, American Surgical Association, Association for Academic Surgery, and the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract. Dr Martin has also developed a record of service with membership and leadership responsibilities within the following national organizations: The Society of Black Academic Surgeons, The Surgical Biology Club II, the Association for Academic Surgery, the Society of University Surgeons, the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract, and the American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Surgery.



Christina Roland
 Texas, USA

Dr Roland is an Associate Professor of Surgery at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas. She is the Section Chief for Sarcoma Surgery and Vice Chair for Research in the Department of Surgical

Oncology and Associate Medical Director for the Sarcoma Center. She received her Bachelor's degree from the University of South Florida, her medical degree from the University of Miami School of Medicine and completed her surgical training at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, Texas. Dr Roland completed a Fellowship in Complex General Surgical Oncology at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, including a T32 Research Fellowship. She also completed advanced training in clinical research and obtained a Master's degree in Clinical Research from the University of Texas Health Science Center McGovern School of Medicine.

Dr Roland's research focuses on improving multimodality care for patient with soft tissue sarcoma, including novel clinical trial design. She serves as Principal Investigator of multiple clinical

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Association for Academic Surgery Speakers and International Faculty Cont'd

trials, including an investigator-initiated phase 2 trial evaluating neoadjuvant checkpoint blockade in sarcoma. Her research has been published in prominent journals such as *Cancer*, *Annals of Surgical Oncology* and *Oncoimmunology*.

Dr Roland is an active member of several national societies (Association for Academic Surgery, Society of Surgical Oncology) and serves on, chairs, or co-chairs several national committees. She is an active member of the Alliance for Clinical Trials in Oncology and is the Chair of the Cancer Care Standards Development Committee in the American College of Surgeons Cancer Research Program.

RACS Section of Academic Surgery Invited Speakers and Local Faculty



Ian Bissett
Aotearoa New Zealand

Ian Bissett is a Professor in Surgery at the University of Auckland and Consultant Colorectal Surgeon at Auckland City Hospital. He worked many years as a general surgeon in Pokhara, Nepal then undertook his MD

research in the anatomy and radiology of rectal cancer at Auckland in 1998-2000. He is the past President of the Coloanal Surgical Society of Australia and New Zealand, was the chair of the New Zealand National Bowel Cancer Working Group (leading the work on development of QPIs for colorectal cancer) for over 10 years, clinical director of the adult National Intestinal Failure and Rehabilitation Service and co-director of the Nutrition Support Team at Auckland City Hospital. His particular interests include rectal cancer, gut motility, faecal incontinence and Global Surgery. He has authored over 180 publications in peer reviewed journals. Ian has been supported by his wife, Jo, for 45 years and has three children and three grandchildren.



Claudia Di Bella
Victoria

Associate Professor Claudia Di Bella is an academic orthopaedic surgeon with a specific interest in advanced technologies for musculoskeletal regeneration.

Associate Professor Di Bella is the leader of the Cartilage Regeneration Program of Research at the University of Melbourne (Australia), focused on the use of advanced 3D printing technologies, including surgical 3D bioprinting, robotics and stem cells for musculoskeletal regeneration. Associate Professor Di Bella was the recipient of the 2017 Royal Australasian College of Surgeons Senior Lecturer Fellowship and the 2020 NHMRC-MRFF Emerging Leadership Investigator Grant (EL1). Associate Professor Di Bella has led her team to successfully secure more than 20 national peer reviewed grants, reinforced and strengthened national and international collaboration with key players in the field, and strongly contributed to the advances of the Biofab3D, the first Australian biofabrication hub embedded in the hospital setting. The successes of Dr Di Bella's team have also been

recognised internationally (2018 World Congress of Cartilage Regeneration: winner of the award for the most innovative work in orthoregeneration) and nationally (Finalist at the prestigious NSW Eureka prize for Excellence in Interdisciplinary Scientific Research and winner of the Veski Innovator of the Year 2018 with her "team Biopen"), and showcased by national media such as ABC news, Channel Ten's "The Project" and National Geographic.

Associate Professor Di Bella is Vice Chair on the Board of Directors of the Australian Orthopaedic Association Research Foundation, faculty member of the Academic Section of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and chair of their annual conference.

Associate Professor Di Bella is very passionate about gender equality in STEM-M, she is a mentor in the academic surgery program of the University of Melbourne as well as a mentor for women in medicine and women in surgery nationally.

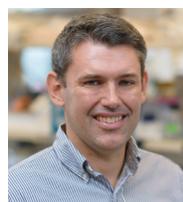


Marc Gladman
South Australia

Marc received his degree in Medicine from King's College in the UK and was awarded a PhD by the University of London prior to completing a NIHR lectureship. Currently, he is the Chair of the Section of Academic

Surgery and Academic Surgical Committee of RACS and a member of the AMC Specialist Education Accreditation Committee, an Advisory member of the Australasian Students' Surgical Association and a member of the PICO Advisory Sub-Committee of the Medical Services Committee of the Department of Health. He serves on the editorial board of the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

Marc is an accomplished researcher and medical educator with clinical research interests focused on the understanding of bowel structure and function in health and disease and the application of such knowledge to improve patient care. His teaching interests focusing on technology-enhanced learning and personalised education. Marc is a member of the Academy of Surgical Educators and the University of Adelaide Education Academy and has authored 10 textbooks, including the highly acclaimed "Examination Surgery: A Guide to Passing the FRACS in General Surgery" and "Clinical Cases and OSCEs in Surgery", which has won recognition at international book awards.



Anthony Glover
New South Wales

Associate Professor Anthony Glover is an endocrine surgeon, surgeon scientist and educator. He is a consultant surgeon with the University of Sydney Endocrine Surgery Unit based at Royal North Shore Hospital

and is the Director for the Master Surgery program at Sydney Medical School. He runs a translational research group focusing on endocrine cancer biology at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research, St Vincent's Clinical School, UNSW where he is a Cancer Institute NSW Fellow.

Anthony's research and education programs focus on improving the understanding of endocrine cancer biology, improving clinical outcomes from surgery and aiding the development of surgical competencies and professional skills. For his research training he completed a PhD with the University of Sydney and received post-doctoral training at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Institute (New York) as an NHMRC Early Career Fellow.

RACS Section of Academic Surgery Invited Speakers and Local Faculty Cont'd



Tamara Glyn
 Aotearoa New Zealand

Tamara Glyn is a general and colorectal surgeon with a particular interest in inflammatory bowel disease and colorectal cancer. She completed a Bachelor of Science (Psychology) followed by a Postgraduate

Diploma (Pharmacology) before undertaking medical training, graduating with an MB ChB from the University of Auckland in 2007. Tamara trained in General Surgery in South Auckland, Palmerston North and Whangarei, being awarded her FRACS in 2014.

She completed the International Fellowship in Colon and Rectal Surgery at the Mayo Clinic (Rochester MN, USA) in 2015 and subsequently spent two further years as a CSSANZ fellow at St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne, Australia) and St James Teaching Hospital (Leeds, UK). She is currently working at Christchurch Hospital and as a senior lecturer with the University of Otago, Christchurch and is undertaking a PhD in Inflammatory bowel disease associated colorectal cancer.



Richard Hanney
 New South Wales

Richard Hanney is a General Surgeon and a Clinical Senior Lecturer at the University of Sydney and Westmead Hospital, as well as a Professor of Surgery at the University of Alabama in Birmingham (UAB).

Born in Belfast and living in Pittsburgh for four years as a child, he completed his medical degree through the University of Sydney and his surgical training through the Western Sydney surgical rotation. Superintendent at Westmead Hospital in 1996, he spent fourteen months as the only surgeon in Broken Hill in Western NSW before completing a Clinical Fellowship in foregut surgery at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh.

He has previously chaired the RACS Younger Fellows Committee, helping form the Trainees Association and establish the Younger Fellows and Trainees' dinner at the ASC. For the last 14 years he has worked with the Academic Section convening the DCAS course and partnering with the Association for Academic Surgery.

He considers himself very fortunate to have worked closely with many remarkable individuals over that time. Opportunities progressed have included establishing and re-establishing relationships between international societies, convening summit meetings to establish a Working Party on Academic Career Pathways, assisting Australasian trainees to find positions in US institutions, hosting residents from UAB and Ohio State University at Westmead Hospital, assisting students with international collaborations and establishing awards to assist medical students attend the DCAS course.

He chaired the RACS Academic Section from 2013-2015, and is currently the Clinical Network Director for Surgery in Western Sydney.



Andrew Hill
 Aotearoa New Zealand

Professor Andrew Hill is an experienced general surgeon and clinical academic. He is currently an Assistant Dean in the Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences at the University of Auckland, and lead the South Auckland Clinical Campus at Middlemore Hospital. He served as the President of the International Society of Surgery (ISS), and is currently a Councillor and Board Member of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS). Professor Hill sits on the board of a Private Surgical Hospital, Ormiston Hospital, in Auckland. His expertise and passions are surgery, surgical research, clinical governance, and governance in health care.

Professor Hill is the author of over 300 scientific publications focusing on Colorectal Surgery and medical education. He is the author of the international PROSPECT guidelines for pain management after haemorrhoidectomy and has recently edited the Proctology section of Keighley and Williams Colorectal Textbook, a major resource for colorectal surgeons the world over.

He has a deep and broad clinical research experience, especially in the area of perioperative care, and takes joy in growing the next generation of researchers.



Jonathan Karpelowsky
 New South Wales

Associate Professor Jonathan Karpelowsky is a paediatric surgeon at the University of Sydney and Children's Hospital Westmead, Sydney, Australia. He initially undertook his training in Cape Town. He remained on as a

senior specialist at the Red Cross Children's Hospital during which time he completed his PhD. In 2010 he migrated to Australia. Associate Professor Karpelowsky has over 60 publications in peer reviewed journals and major paediatric surgical text books. He is active in clinical and basic science research in the areas of paediatric oncology, thoracic conditions of childhood and clinical trials in Paediatric Surgery. He leads a basic science research group looking at liquid biopsies in paediatric cancer. He also has a number of collaborations with biomedical engineering looking at augmented intraoperative reality. He is the immediate past Chairperson of the Board of Paediatric Surgery, which oversees paediatric surgery training in Australia and New Zealand, and is the Chairperson of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Paediatric Surgery scientific sub-committee.



Cherry Koh
 New South Wales

Associate Professor Cherry Koh is an academic colorectal surgeon based at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney and the Chris O'Brien Lifehouse. She completed her Fellowship in Oxford and Sydney and is currently a Director

at the Surgical Outcomes Research Centre at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Clinically, her interests are in advanced cancers and peritoneal malignancies. She has broad academic interests and is currently on the editorial board for Colorectal Diseases and Diseases of the Colon and Rectum.

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Kelvin Kong
New South Wales

Kelvin feels extremely lucky to be in a wonderful life surrounded by all he loves. He is an experienced Surgeon with a demonstrated history of working across the health industry. Involved in clinical research, medical education, medicine, surgery, paediatrics, health policy and Indigenous education. Kelvin graduated from the University of NSW in 1999.

Completing his internship at St Vincent's Hospital in Darlinghurst, he streamed early into a surgical career, completing resident medical officer and junior and senior registrar positions at various attachments. Along the way, he has been privileged in serving the urban, rural and remote communities.

He was awarded his Fellowship from the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) in 2007, he was also admitted to Australian Society of Head and Neck Surgeons (ASOHNS) and pursued further training in Paediatric ENT Surgery, being grateful and honoured by his Fellowship at The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne in 2007-2008.

He is now practising in Newcastle on Awabakal and Worimi Country, as a Surgeon specialising in Paediatric and Adult Oto-Rhino-Laryngology, Head & Neck Surgery (Ear, Nose & Throat Surgery). He has a very broad adult and paediatric practice, whilst having special interests in paediatric airway, adult and paediatric cochlear implantation, and voice and swallow disorders.

He is an active member of the community, having served on and currently involved in multiple advisory boards and committees. He is currently serving as secretary of Australia and New Zealand Society Paediatric Otolaryngology (ANZSPO), he is the current chair of Mina (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee for RACS) and is also currently serving on Cancer Australia's Advisory board.

He has published articles and presented on a variety of ear, nose and throat conditions as well as Indigenous health issues, both nationally and internationally. He is active in reviewing articles for publication, lecturing and teaching allied health professionals, medical students at several universities and both unaccredited and advanced medical and surgical trainees.

Kelvin hails from the Worimi people of Port Stephens, NSW, Australia. Being surrounded by health, he has always championed for the improvement of health and education. Complementing his practice as a surgeon, he is kept grounded by his family, who are the strength and inspiration to him, remaining involved in numerous projects and committees to help give back to the community.



Michelle Locke
Aotearoa New Zealand

Dr Locke is a Senior Lecturer in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery with the University of Auckland. Her medical degree is from the University of Auckland School of Medicine and her Plastic Surgery training occurred at tertiary hospitals around New Zealand. During her advanced surgical training, she spent two years undertaking a Doctorate of Medicine (MD) degree at the School of Biological Sciences. Her thesis topic was "Mesenchymal stem cells and their use in Plastic Surgery".

After gaining her FRACS, she completed two years of sub-speciality Fellowship training in North America, including six months at Paces Plastic Surgery in Atlanta, USA as well as 18 months at The Aesthetic Institute, Toronto General Hospital and Women's College Hospital, all in Toronto, Canada. She returned to New Zealand in December 2011 and works clinically at Middlemore Hospital in Auckland with a sub-speciality interest in breast reconstruction and oculoplastic surgery. She was prompted to Head of Department in 2019. She gained an academic appointment in 2013. Her current research interests include full thickness skin engineering, clinical applications of Raman spectroscopy as well as clinical research in breast reconstruction outcomes and translational research. She is married with two children.



Sally Langley
Aotearoa New Zealand

Dr Sally Langley is a plastic and reconstructive surgeon, who is based in Christchurch, New Zealand. She has worked in both public and private surgery in Christchurch for more than 30 years. Her work has covered the whole spectrum of Plastic Surgery including craniofacial, cleft lip and palate, head and neck, paediatric, reconstructive including microsurgery, hand surgery, as well as skin cancer and breast surgery.

Dr Langley has been involved with surgical education and training throughout her career. She was an examiner in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery for nine years and for two years she served as the New Zealand deputy Chair of the Court of Examiners, the entity which conducts the Fellowship exam of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS).

Dr Langley is a former president of the New Zealand Association of Plastic Surgeons. In 2014 she was elected member of the RACS Council where she chaired the Professional Standards and Development Board from 2019 till 2021. Since May 2021 Dr Langley is the RACS President.



Ruth Mitchell
New South Wales

Dr Ruth Mitchell is a Fellowship trained Neurosurgeon, with a keen interest in paediatric neurosurgery and brain tumour biology. Dr Mitchell completed her medical studies at Flinders University in 2007, then commenced Neurosurgery training across leading Victorian and New South Wales medical centres. Dr Mitchell is also a Fellow of the Faculty of Surgical Trainers of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.



Payal Mukherjee
New South Wales

Associate Professor Payal Mukherjee is an Adult and Paediatric ENT Surgeon and a leader in Ear Bionics research such as 3D printed and Bioprinted medical devices and Cochlear Implants. She is the chair of RACS NSW, an executive member of the Section of Academic Surgery, a committee member of Research and Evaluation-ASERNIPS and the Innovation Lead of the RPA Institute of Academic Surgery.

She is passionate about global translation of Australian biotechnology, on gender equity in surgery as well as developing

RACS Section of Academic Surgery Invited Speakers and Local Faculty Cont'd

STEMM skills in young girls. She was a finalist of the NSW Premier Women of the Year in 2019.



Greg O'Grady
Aotearoa New Zealand

Greg O'Grady is a Professor of Surgery at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. He has an interest in medical devices, gastrointestinal function, and post-operative recovery. He has published over 170 papers

and 20 patents, and is a co-founder and Director of Alimetry and the Insides Company.



Toby Richards
Western Australia

Toby Richards is the Professor of Vascular Surgery and Director of the Clinical Trials Unit at UWA. He leads clinical trials in surgery and perioperative care including, PREVENTT, CAVIAR, ITACS, ECST2 with over 200 peer

reviewed publications (H index 50, SciVAL 2.34).

He is a strong advocate for trainee and student enablement, having supervised over 16 PhD's and more than 50 Postgraduate projects. With REACS CTANZ and colleagues in ANZ he collaborated in the MRFF – SUNRRISE RCT and more recently the POSTventT trial on post-operative complications recruiting more than 2500 patients in 52 ANZ centres in six months from ethics to completion.

He is an active supporter of collaborative clinical trial networks to train and mentor the next generation of researchers for quality research.



Christobel Saunders
Victoria

Professor Christobel Saunders AO, MB BS, FRCS, FRACS, FAAHMS is the current James Steward Chair of Surgery, the Head of the Department of Surgery at the University of Melbourne (Royal Melbourne Hospital

precinct) and consultant surgeon in the Department of General Surgeon at Royal Melbourne Hospital and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute. She is internationally recognised as one of Australia's most prominent research-orientated cancer surgeons. She has substantially contributed to breast cancer research including clinical trials of new treatments, psychosocial, translational and health services research and is active in several areas of surgical oncology cancer research, with a particular emphasis on breast cancer.

In recognition of her sustained career excellence and innovation, Christobel has been publicly acknowledged through numerous awards and honours the most recent being the AO (Order of Australia) (2018), Uccio Querci della Rovere Award (2018), International Women's Day WA Women's Hall of Fame Inductee (2018) and WA Scientist of the Year (2017) and Cancer Council WA career Achievement Award (2021).

She has performed research for more than 30 years evaluating the efficacy and utility of therapy for early breast cancer. In the

past five years, Christobel has published over 200 peer-reviewed journal articles (two in The Lancet), six letters to the editor/ editorials, two research reports, two book chapters and one book. She sits on the boards of a number of health and research organisations including as Vice-President for All.can international and on the boards of All.can Australia, Breast Cancer Trials, the Australian Centre for Value Based Health Care and PathWest.

Christobel is closely involved in strategic planning and management of health and cancer services in Australia including being on the Medicare Review Advisory Committee, past President of the Cancer Council WA and Breast Surgical Society of ANZ, and past Advisory Council member of Cancer Australia. She was Inaugural Chair of the state Health Service Provider, PathWest Laboratory Medicine.



Julian Smith
Victoria

Professor Julian Smith, a Cardiothoracic Surgeon, has been Professor and Head of the Department of Surgery (School of Clinical Sciences at Monash Health) at Monash University and Head of the Department

of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Monash Health (Monash Medical Centre) since 2001. His recent roles include being an elected full-term Councillor of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, Chairman of the Professional Development and Standards Board, and Chairman of the Division of Research, Audit and Academic Surgery. He is the immediate past-President and Governor of the Australian and New Zealand Chapter of the American College of Surgeons and a past-President of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Cardiac and Thoracic Surgeons. He is currently Editor-in-Chief of the ANZ Journal of Surgery. His main clinical and research interests are in less invasive cardiac surgery, robotically assisted surgery, mechanical support of the circulation, cardiothoracic surgery clinical trials/audit/registries, the use of evidence-based medicine by surgeons and surgical education from which over 425 publications have arisen. He was amongst the first cohort of graduates to receive the Master of Surgical Education degree from the University of Melbourne and in 2018 was an inaugural inductee into the Academy of Master Surgeon Educators of the American College of Surgeons.



David Watson
South Australia

Professor Watson is Professor and Head of Surgery at Flinders University, and an Oesophagogastric Surgeon at Flinders Medical Centre in Adelaide. His interests include gastro-oesophageal reflux, and

oesophagogastric cancer. He leads research addressing benign and malignant oesophageal disease, integrating laboratory, clinical and population research streams. He has published more than 450 papers and book chapters.

Professor Watson led the establishment of the Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand Gastric and Oesophageal Surgery Association (AANZGOSA) as its foundation President from 2006-2010. He has served on the Council for the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences (AAHMS). He is the immediate past-President for the International Society for Diseases of the Esophagus (ISDE). In 2018 he was appointed Clinical Director for the Clinical Trials Network Australia and New Zealand (CTANZ), an initiative of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons to enhance surgical research capacity.

Developing a Career and skills in Academic Surgery (DCAS) Course

RACS Section of Academic Surgery Invited Speakers and Local Faculty Cont'd

Professor Watson has been a recipient of the John Mitchell Crouch Fellowship from the RACS, a James IV Travelling Fellowship, Honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, election to Fellowship of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences, and appointment to a Matthew Flinders Distinguished Professorship at Flinders University.



Nichola Wilson
Aotearoa New Zealand

Dr Nichola Wilson is an Orthopaedic Consultant at Starship Child Health in Auckland, New Zealand and senior lecturer at the University of Auckland. Her research interest is the improvement of outcomes for children with orthopaedic conditions.



Deborah Wright
Aotearoa New Zealand

Deborah Wright is a General and Colorectal surgeon in Dunedin.

Deborah began her medical training in the UK, before relocating to New Zealand in 2003 where she completed her training in General

Surgery and a PhD in the molecular biology of colorectal cancer. She went on to complete subspecialty training in Colorectal Surgery, spending time in Auckland and Birmingham, UK.

Deborah returned to New Zealand in 2019 and was appointed as a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Surgical Sciences, Dunedin Medical School. Her research interests reflect her clinical practice and role as a clinical teacher; they include cancer genomics, medical education, gender equity and trainee-led collaborative research studies. Deborah is privileged to support medical students and doctors in training to lead New Zealand's involvement in large-scale national, international and global surgical studies capable of answering clinically-relevant questions and changing clinical practice.

Abstracts

Session 1: A Career in Academic Surgery

7:30am - 9:10am

Why every surgeon can and should be an academic surgeon *Christobel Saunders*

7:30am - 7:50am

Being an academic surgeon encompasses many qualities and roles which may include research, knowledge dissemination including publication, teaching, training and mentoring, professional leadership, or government advisory positions. There is no stereotype of an academic surgeon and in fact any or all of these skills can be practiced by a wide range of surgeons. The "academic" attributes of curiosity, using your intellect and your hands, observation and the desire to do better for my patients, taking ideas, information, and observations from the bedside and asking how we can do better and disseminating knowledge, as well as teaching and mentoring are attributes all surgeons should have.

Where do good ideas and research questions come from and where do I begin?

Andrew Hill

7:50am - 8:10am

Identifying a meaningful research question and being able to develop this idea into actionable research is critical to every scientist. Is the research question answerable and actionable? Are you and others passionate about the topic – does it have potential impact? Are there resources, methodologies, and time to answer the question? Intentional thought and dedicated time should be allowed for hypothesis generation and study design.

A productive mentor and mentee relationship - What's needed?

Callisia Clarke

8:10am - 8:30am

Mentorship plays an integral role in the development of young academic surgeons. Most departments of surgery, however, do not have formalized mentorship programs and the attributes of a successful mentor or mentee are not always innate. This talk will highlight some important elements for sustaining and optimizing mentor-mentee relationships.

How to supervise a surgical higher degree and get it done on time

Marc Gladman

8:30am - 8:50am

Increasingly, surgical trainees are electing to undertake dedicated periods of study / research leading to the award of higher degrees. Such a decision represents a substantial investment in time (and cost). Such an endeavor potentially represents one of the most unique and exiting periods of a surgeon's training. However, it can also be one of the most challenging, given the intellectual and psychological tribulations encountered as a consequence of the steep learning curve of new skills and the relative unfamiliarity with the environment.

It is perhaps of no surprise, therefore, that many trainees fail to thrive during this period of their training, and some may not achieve the desired outcome of a higher degree. This need not necessarily be the case.

The key to successful higher degree completion involves the (i) the project (ii) the candidate, and (iii) the supervisor in optimal integration within an explicit, mutually agreed framework that encourages productivity and progress, focused on ensuring achievement of the end goal.

This presentation will outline the key components of higher degree supervision that will allow Trainees to maximise their return on this important investment and supervisors to facilitate the process. Specifically, it will provide a systematic approach that will guide potential higher degree candidates and supervisors along this complex journey towards timely completion while ensuring maximum research outputs.

Session 2: New Directions and Challenges in Surgical Academia

9:30am - 10:30am

Research in Indigenous or vulnerable communities - Where to begin (update)

Kelvin Kong

9:30am - 9:50am

Abstract not available.

Beyond the impact factor - Social media and open source options in academic surgery: Pitfalls and benefits

Colin Martin

9:50am - 10:10am

Publication of scientific work has taken on several forms in the current digital age that can be advantageous to academic surgeons. Many journals offer open source publication options that can expedite the publishing process. There are additional publication costs that accompany open source publications. Furthermore, there are additional social media and electronic platforms that offer additional ways to communicate new research findings. The current presentation will identify established and new electronic publishing options. In addition, the pitfalls of predatory journals will be discussed. Predatory journals often charge high publishing costs, lack an editorial board, robust peer review process, and do not archive their papers in established databases such as PubMed.^{1,2}

References:

1. Bruckner, H.W. Effect of antibiotics on mice treated with cyclophosphamide. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 57, 1249-1252 (1976).
2. Burns, H.R., Ferry, A.M., Dibbs, R.P., Smerica, A.M. & Buchanan, E.P. Predatory Journals: How Plastic Surgeons Avoid Becoming the Prey. *Plast Reconstr Surg* 149, 602e-603e (2022).

Choosing your journal and avoiding pitfalls

Juliet Emamaullee

10:10am - 10:30am

This presentation will discuss the evaluation of journal quality through impact factor, selecting appropriate journals for your research, the value and pitfalls of open access publishing, and avoiding 'predatory journals'.

Hot Topic in Academic Surgery

10:30am - 11:00am

Burnout and mental health in academic medicine

Eric Levi

10:35am - 11:00am

Do academic surgeons suffer from burnout? Would the academic surgical community admit that a large percentage of us suffer quietly from burnout and poor mental health? The terms stress, burnout, moral distress, moral injury, compassion fatigue and mental illness are not interchangeable though they are in reality interdependent. They each have different aetiologies and therefore different solutions. The cost of poor mental health and burnout to the academic community is significant, from loss of efficacy to loss of lives. The problem is complex and therefore the solutions cannot be simplistically distilled to yoga or resilience e-modules. The extent of the problem and how it impacts the academic surgical community will be discussed. Methods on identification of the challenges and crafting of solutions will be considered. The longevity and influence of our surgical careers are dependent on many things including our personal health and departmental health. How can we as surgical leaders in the clinical and academic fields provide leadership on this matter? How can we as academic surgeons and leaders remain on fire without getting burned out?

Session 3: Tools for Academic Output

11:20am - 12:40pm

Preparing an abstract

Shipra Arya

11:20am - 11:40am

An abstract is a summary of a scientific manuscript that conveys key points to the reader. It is the first component of any manuscript and often the only accessible part through search engines and bibliographic databases outside of paid firewalls or institutional subscriptions. It is also the primary method of submission of your scholarly work to scientific meetings for consideration as a podium or poster presentation. Hence, it is of crucial importance for an abstract to convey the message of your manuscript and generate interest. It is important to organise your abstract per guidelines from the journal or scientific meeting that you intend to submit to.

Typical format of an abstract includes the background, methods, results and conclusions sections. The background describes the aim of your manuscript and the knowledge gap or context that is being addressed. The methods should succinctly describe the design of your experiment or cohort and the analytic techniques used. The results should describe the key findings of your manuscript including effect sizes and statistical measures. Not all outcomes presented in your manuscript need to be listed in the abstract. You could focus on 1-2 salient outcomes. Lastly, the conclusion should synthesize the main take-away points of the manuscript. A well-written abstract is an excellent tool to attract interest in the manuscript from editors, reviewers and readers.

Presenting at a scientific meeting

Christina Roland

11:40am - 12:00pm

This presentation will review the fundamentals for a concise, effective presentation of scientific data in Academic Surgery, including oral and poster presentations.

Developing a Career and skills in Academic Surgery (DCAS) Course

Writing and submitting a manuscript

Amir Ghaferi

12:00pm - 12:20pm

One of the key pieces of academic currency is a manuscript. It is how academic surgeons communicate their craft to others in the field. There are numerous forms of manuscripts including systematic reviews, meta-analyses, commentaries, editorials, and primary research papers. Writing not only permits you to disseminate your findings through peer-reviewed journals, but it also provides you the opportunity to critically review the literature, evaluate your results, and place your findings into the greater context of your scientific area. While oral presentations are no doubt important, the written word remains a document that can be referenced and reviewed for many years to come. This talk will address how to approach scientific writing through a systematic and strategic approach to deliver a clear and concise product.

Keynote Presentation

12:40pm - 1:25pm

Reflections on building and maintaining an academic career

Mark Smithers

12:45pm - 1:25pm

It was clear to me I wanted a career contributing to improving patient care, that had an impact beyond the individual patient. To me this meant being significantly involved in teaching and research. The key was collaboration along each of the important pillars for an academic career: clinical practice, teaching, and research. Clinical practice through collaboration with like-minded surgeons as new techniques in laparoscopic surgery progressed, monitoring, assessing, and reporting outcomes. Teaching by involvement with medical students and collaborating on RACS surgical training programs. Research collaborations with scientists whose career was in science, not surgery, and from whom I learnt many non-technical skills. The research varied from epidemiology, the development of animal models for cancer treatments and multidisciplinary involvement to improve cancer outcomes. Stephen Covey wrote the book "The 7 habits of highly effective people". I believe that the term he used "to sharpen the saw" was the key to the maintenance of my academic commitments because my career was not static but, as described by Covey, I had an "upward spiral of growth" as a person, doctor, surgeon, and researcher. The growth occurs due to experience, the influences of others who provided support and has included the development of strong national and international collaborations through clinical networks and trial organisations. Administrative leadership, both clinically and academically, led a greater ability to better assist and guide Trainees, Fellows, and research higher degree students and provide a wonderful variation in academic practice.

Session 4: Concurrent Academic Workshops

Concurrent Workshop 1: Finding my Fit

2:25pm - 3:30pm

Translational research - Bedside to bench to bedside

Anthony Glover

2:25pm - 2:40pm

Translational research takes scientific discoveries made in the lab and applies them in the clinic and community with the aim of developing new treatments and approaches to medical care that improve the health of the population. Translational research is a focus of the major research funding schemes such as the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) as well as a focus of industry and commercialisation and innovation groups.

As surgeons, with our expert understanding of clinical problems and access to patients and patient samples we have a natural advantage over other medical researchers to lead translational research. In this talk, I will examine how surgeons can build and use translational research to build research into their career and discuss barriers to be overcome and the rewards of being involved in translational research.

In this talk I will explore how long-term strategies such as tissue banking, research program, academic development and planning can be utilised so that surgeons can lead translational research that makes an impact for our patients using examples from my clinical and research training in Australia, the UK and USA.

References:

1. Genomic Cancer Medicine Program, Garvan Institute of Medical Research, St Vincent's Clinical School, UNSW
2. Endocrine Surgery Unit, Royal North Shore Hospital
3. Clinical & Professional Development Unit, Sydney Medical School, Faculty of Medicine and Health, The University of Sydney

Clinical research - cohort studies, collaboration and trials

Deborah Wright

2:40pm - 2:55pm

This presentation will outline the key principles of collaborative research, its power to produce practice-changing research outcomes whilst building research capability, and how to get involved.

Originating in the UK 15 years ago, large-scale collaborative surgical research is gaining momentum in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand (AoNZ). Over the last 3 years, surgeons and Trainees in our region have participated in multi-national cohort studies investigating a range of surgical challenges, including management of diverticulitis (DAMASCUS)¹, and global studies to define the peri-operative risk from Covid-19 (CovidSurg).

More recently, Trainee-led collaborative groups in Australia and AoNZ have successfully designed and completed their own large cohort studies investigating post-operative anaemia (POSTVenTT)³ and outcomes following cholecystectomy (CHOLENZ)⁴.

As well as coming together to perform large studies, groups of Trainees and students have formed collaborative networks around Australia and AoNZ, working together to design new studies and to support skill acquisition amongst their membership.

Having gained research experience, the membership of the medical student network TASMAN has successfully designed the OPERAS study to investigate post-operative opioid use. This home-grown project is taking place, not only in Australia and AoNZ, but at multiple international sites.⁵

Participating in collaborative research offers the opportunity to gain research skills and experience during clinical training, and to contribute to practice-changing research. Students, Trainees and surgeons are encouraged to join their local networks.

References:

1. DAMASCUS study management group (2021). Colorectal Dis. doi: 10.1111/codi.15699.
2. <https://globalsurg.org/covidsurg/>
3. POSTVenTT Study Collaborators (2021). Colorectal Disease. DOI: 10.1111/CODI.15902.
4. <https://www.stratacollaboration.com/cholelenz>
5. <https://anzsurgsocs.org/tasman/operas-study-hub/>

Interdisciplinary research

Payal Mukherjee

2:55pm - 3:10pm

Interdisciplinary teams form the bedrock of translational research. Research impact should span beyond contribution of knowledge and improving health outcomes. Social and economic impacts should form part of the goals for all research as it moves towards clinical translation. However, clinical translation of research often requires numerous non-technical skills which is not possible without having interdisciplinary skills mix.

Surgeons and policy makers are both under-represented groups in translational research. However, the most common reason of failure of commercial outputs of research is lack of alignment of clinical need, indicating the importance of clinical input early in the project plan. Surgery forms a bridge between science and policy. Academic surgeons play a key role to champion interdisciplinary research and ensure that 1) research is driven by unmet clinical needs, 2) research implementation is supported by appropriate policy and 3) research is adopted by the clinical community in an evidence-based manner. Thus, academic surgeons also play a key leadership role in ethical and sustainable deployment of health technology.

There is little training and support to develop these diverse leadership roles for academic surgeons. Collaborative networks and mentorships are key in training the next generation of academic surgeons in developing these skills early in their career so they are able to have a greater impact in the community. Having an interdisciplinary skills mix in their project teams is critical for academic surgeons to be dynamic leaders and have wider research impact in the community.

Session 4: Concurrent Academic Workshops

Concurrent Workshop 2: Surgical Research Funding

2:25pm - 3:30pm

A recipe for successful grant writing

Greg O'Grady

2:25pm - 2:40pm

High quality surgical research can be conducted without significant grant funding support. However, grant funding is typically needed for ambitious projects that require dedicated research staff time, involve scientific discovery or translation, and for controlled clinical trials. This talk will provide tips for successful grant writing from an academic surgeon who has a track record of success in this area.

Targeting surgical research funding: Philanthropy, NGO's, societies, MRFF and NHMRC - Where is best?

Claudia Di Bella

2:40pm - 2:55pm

Academic surgeons face a number of roadblocks in obtaining research grants, especially when competing with research-only scientists. These include: (1) time restrictions due to concomitant clinical and surgical practice; (2) lack of specific training; (3) limited research output compared to research-only applicants; (3) time delays between PhD and high output; (4) pressures related to the support of lab/research personnel.

These roadblocks can negatively affect the ability of academic surgeons to be competitive in obtaining research grants.

In my talk I will analyse these roadblocks and identify the areas where we can focus to become more competitive as academic surgeons in the scientific arena. I will give examples based on my personal experience, to inspire young surgeons in undertaking the academic research path and provide an overview on the possible strategies to overcome these obstacles.

Looking for the big prize - MRFF and NHMRC - Strategies for success

David Watson

2:55pm - 3:10pm

Decisions were made by the Australian Government about 5 years ago to 1) establish the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF), and 2) cap the total budget for the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). Overall, the total amount of money for medical research from government has continued to grow, but the allocation between MRFF and NHMRC has shifted towards MRFF, with nearly 50% of public research money now from MRFF.

MRFF allocations favour clinical and translational research, and offer a new opportunity for clinician scientists. They often require a translatable outcome within 12 months of the grant completing. Also, allocations generally fit within targeted schemes that are approved by the Minister of Health, and are within a set of agreed priorities that are reviewed every 3 years.

Concurrently NHMRC restructured its grant schemes from 2019. Ideas grants, Synergy grants and Investigator grants are the key programs. An individual can hold only 2 grants across these schemes. Approximately 15% of the NHMRC funds are allocated to Synergy grants which replaced large program grants. 25% of funds are allocated to Ideas grants which fund specific research projects. Assessment of Ideas grants focusses on the science and significance of the proposal, and track record is technically no longer part of the assessment matrix. These grants offer potential opportunities to less established researchers.

Investigator grants now comprise 50% of NHMRC funds. They offer salary support (0-100%; fraction to be determined by the applicant), and a research support package (\$300-600K per year for 5 years; amount allocated based on the ranking of the application). For these grants, scoring is based 70% on track record and 30% on the research proposal.

The landscape for major grant funding has changed, and each scheme ranks applications using quite different criteria. There are potential new opportunities for clinical researchers via MRFF and for less established researchers via NHMRC ideas grants. Surgeons seeking major grant funding need to be strategic and consider how they can work across multidisciplinary research teams, target ideas that have a clear translation pathway, and tailor applications to a changed funding environment.

Session 5: Closing Session

3:30pm - 4:00pm

The far and wide of an academic career

Ian Bissett

3:30pm - 3:50pm

This presentation will span the almost 40 years of my academic surgery career from New Zealand to Nepal and back again. It will include the challenges and rewards associated with research and teaching in these settings and share lessons learnt, often the hard way, along the journey.

Course Organiser

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