RANZCP Strategic Response Plan 2021

Redefining our focus in a COVID-19 environment

As our nations move towards operating in a COVID-19 normal environment, like many organisations, the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) now more than ever needs to focus on the health, economic and humanitarian impacts of COVID-19.

The RANZCP has been able to manage the impacts of COVID-19 on its operations in 2020, and it is now the time for the Board to turn its attention to the future strategic oversight of the RANZCP in a COVID-19 world.

The following response has been developed to guide the work of the RANZCP and support our vision, to ‘improve the mental health of communities through high quality psychiatric care, education, leadership and advocacy’, during this challenging period.

A vision, which now more than ever, is required to continue our commitment to advocacy and education, and our support for the recovery efforts of governments and the mental wellbeing of communities and our membership.

This response will build on the 2018-2020 Strategic Plan, which has been extended, and both documents will provide the RANZCP's strategic focus for 2021 and guide our COVID-safe operations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of RANZCP members and staff.

Key responses and activities

**Advocacy**

» Seek opportunities to reinforce and advocate the RANZCP’s position about optimal mental health systems and models of care for Australia and New Zealand, supporting the COVID-19 response and recovery and ensuring that existing resources are maintained and improved.

» Advocate for people and communities experiencing the psychological consequences of COVID-19, and who require access to services.

» Monitor and seek to address any emerging or worsening mental health disparities that may occur as a result of COVID-19.

» Enhance the profile of psychiatry, and support policy and advocacy generally, with the flexibility to adapt existing and develop new advocacy as the impacts of COVID-19 emerge.

» Support and participate in initiatives that provide mental health care and wellbeing and safety initiatives for all medical professionals and other healthcare staff.

**Membership Services**

» Maintain ongoing and develop new opportunities for effective and timely engagement and communication to and amongst the membership, and ensure members are kept informed of the RANZCP and governments responses.

» Ensure the health and wellbeing of members is a priority across all areas of the RANZCP.

» Prioritise cultural safety and cultural responsiveness for the organisation and membership and enhance the resources available to members.

» Ensure the RANZCP’s financial stability is maintained and that the organisation continues to grow to meet the needs of the membership.

**Education and Workforce**

» Continue to develop and support training and assessments to facilitate the achievement of Fellowship, whilst minimising the impacts of any necessary changes on the broader psychiatric workforce.

» Enhance continuing professional development experiences for members including virtual conferences, e-sessions, and podcasts.

» Ensure RANZCP structures and programs effectively support the training of psychiatrists and resource the work of all our committees.

» Collaborate with our Pacific and Asian neighbours, and international colleagues, on activities to support the health and safety of their communities
With the outbreak of COVID-19, we planned and prepared for the worst. As a direct consequence of the strength and speed of our collective responses in Australia and New Zealand, we are now looking at a slightly different, more positive future. The full impacts of the pandemic, including the medium- and longer-term mental health, social and economic consequences, are still to come. Now is a good opportunity to reflect on what we have done well, and the lessons learnt as we chart a comprehensive RANZCP path forward for the benefit of our trainees, members and the communities we serve.

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President