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## WINTER 2022

*An update on what has been happening across RPA Institute of Academic Surgery this winter.*

## ROBOTICS SUMMIT

The RPA Institute of Academic Surgery hosted the two day Surgical Robotics and Innovation Summit in June 2022. This is the second biggest multidisciplinary surgical robotics summit in the world and the only one of its kind in Australia.

520 delegates gathered at the Sydney Masonic Centre to listen to leading national and international robotic surgeons on the latest surgical advancements.

Convened by RPA urological surgeons Dr Scott Leslie and A/Prof Ruban Thanigasalam, the Surgical Robotics and Innovation Summit not only featured some of the newest systems on the market, but also 3D printing, augmented reality, and immunofluorescence technology, which are now used more broadly in surgery.

Nine surgical robots were on display - some for the first time - providing delegates with a hands-on experience never offered before.

The Summit featured programs on Orthopaedics, Upper GI, Colorectal, Thoracic, Cardiac, Nursing, Head and Neck/ENT, Gynaecology and Urology.

Six surgeons from the US, UK, Singapore and Korea joined our local faculty of 92 to share their knowledge and experience in robotic surgery. An additional 29 international surgeons joined virtually.

"The unique multidisciplinary aspect allows us as surgeons to share ideas and data from the latest research in surgical robotics and learn from other specialties on technique and approaches" – A/Prof Thanigasalam.

"And there is much more on the horizon" - Dr Leslie.

A big congratulations to the convenors, organisers and team for putting together such a well received program.



MORE HERE

# WELCOME

## Mariana Sena Board

Acting Associate Director, IAS

A warm welcome to the new Acting Associate Director, Mariana Sena Board. Mariana is an experienced hospital administrator who came through the Sydney Local Health District Graduate Health Management Program and has worked previously as the Deputy Director of Clinical Support Services at RPA Hospital and Business Manager of the Perioperative Department at Concord Hospital.

Welcome Mariana.



## Julia Gullotto

Administration Officer, IAS

We are excited to welcome Julia Gullotto as our new administration officer. Julia recently completed a Bachelor of Health Science at the University of Technology, Sydney in 2021, and has previously worked in retail and as a medical secretary at the RPAH Medical Centre. She is passionate about being part of a collaborative community which aims to improve and deliver high quality outcomes for patients.

Welcome Julia.

# CONGRATULATIONS

# CELEBRATING 1000 CASES



Congratulations to the RPA Pelvic Exenteration team, as RPA becomes the first hospital in the world to perform 1000 cases of Pelvic Exenteration surgery.

Commencing in 1994, under the leadership of Professor Michael Solomon, this complex procedure is performed to remove cancer that has involved part, or all of, the contents of the pelvis, giving patients a chance for a better quality of life. In most cases, Pelvic Exenteration surgery may be a patient's only hope for a cure.

Our highly-skilled multi disciplinary team – made up of surgeons, anaesthetists, physicians, nurses, allied health professionals and pain management specialists – care for patients undergoing the surgery.

Reaching the 1000th case milestone is a significant achievement, and it is by far the largest number of cases performed by a single institution worldwide.

RPA's success is a testament to the highly talented and dedicated teams involved, who consistently achieve excellent healthcare outcomes for our patients.

Congratulations to everyone involved (including colorectal surgeon Dr Kirk Austin and clinical nurse consultant Sophie Hatcher pictured) in reaching this incredible milestone.

## Ruthven Blackburn Medal awarded to IAS Co-Chair

IAS Co-Chair, **Professor Michael Solomon** has been awarded the prestigious honour of the Ruthven Blackburn

Medal for being an outstanding clinical researcher. This medal was awarded at a celebratory event with Professor Solomon presenting on his research career.

Professor Solomon is a pioneer in Pelvic Exenteration research and been a strong mentor for many RPA staff.

Congratulations to Professor Solomon on this well deserved achievement.

Congratulations to the **RPA Peritonectomy Service**, who have celebrated five years of service in April 2022. This collective effort and achievement celebrates the various surgical specialties, disciplines and departments involved in RPA Peritonectomy surgery.

Congratulations to Associate Professor Jonathan Hong's masters student, **Dr Steven Parades** who received a grant from General Surgeons Australia (The Junior Doctor Research Grants have been established to support GSA Junior Doctor Members in progressing or commencing research in General Surgery) for his study examining the functional impact of pelvic radiotherapy in cancer treatment.

Colorectal Surgeon and Program Lead for the peritonectomy program, **Dr. Nabila Ansari** has completed a Masters of Philosophy with the University of Sydney on 'Understanding surgeon decision making in the use of radiotherapy as neoadjuvant treatment in rectal cancer'. Dr. Ansari completed her research under the guidance of A/Prof Haryana Dhillon, A/Prof Christopher Young and Dr Timothy Schlub.

## CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF SOuRCe

The Surgical Outcomes Research Centre (SOuRCe) celebrated a wonderful 20 year anniversary in August 2022. Lead by Professor Michael Solomon, the talented team at SOuRCe have played a pivotal role in facilitating research in surgery across RPA Departments.

Amongst many other achievements, SOuRCe started the Master of Surgery Program with USYD, established the Notaras Scholarship, pioneered measures in patient choice and have obtained over \$20million in competitive funding, with more than 500 publications, 22 books and supervision of over 70 higher degree students. The IAS takes great pride in this momentous celebration for SOuRCe and congratulates them on this special achievement.



# FAREWELL

## Associate Professor Roger Garsia

A warm farewell to **A/Prof Roger Garsia** who has stepped down as the Head of Sydney University Central Clinical School. We would like to thank A/Prof Garsia for all that he has done for the IAS, including playing a key role in the consultation and set up of the IAS and being a passionate advocate for supporting surgical training and education.

## Trent Cameron

Trent Cameron, the inaugural Facility Coordinator of the Surgical Robotics and Training Facility (RTI), has taken a secondment with The RPA Virtual Hospital (rpavirtual).

Trent played a pivotal role in the Aboriginal Cultural Response Team as part of rpavirtual's COVID-19 response and is still on secondment. We wish Trent all the best and thank him for his dedication in running the RTI over the past 6 years.

## Lucy Mackenzie

We farewell IAS Manager of Surgical Partnerships, Lucy Mackenzie who has worked at the IAS since 2015. Lucy has taken a secondment with Sydney Local Health District's Media Team for the next 12 months. Lucy has been an instrumental part of the IAS team and we wish her all the best in her new role.

# VISITING SURGEONS

A/Prof Cherry Koh had the pleasure of showing Surgical Consultants, Dr Frank McDermott and Professor Neil Smart around the IAS facilities and SOuRCe.

Both from Exeter in the UK; Professor Smart is the Editor in Chief for Colorectal Disease, and Dr McDermott is the Editor for the BJS Open.

They were both visiting Australia for the RACS ASC as invited speakers.

The IAS also welcomed Dr Kari Clifford and Dr John Woodfield from the University of Otago. Dr Clifford is a Research Fellow and Dr Woodfield a Senior Lecturer, both with the Department of Surgical Sciences.

The Otago University visit was a wonderful opportunity to showcase the unique facilities in the Surgical Skills Laboratory and Simulation Theatre.



# INNOVATION, VALUE AND THOUGHT

## IAS COLLABORATION WITH SIMON FIELDHOUSE

Kai Cheng, the IAS Research and Innovation Manager has collaborated with beloved local artist, Simon Fieldhouse to create a range of 3D printed sculptures.

These include our first 3D printed surgical robot, an operating theatre bed and hospital sculptures including patients, surgeons, nurses and portering staff.

These creative pieces from Kai and Simon's partnership tell the story of the patient journey and symbolise the groundbreaking Innovation, Value and Thought that the IAS is known for.

Congratulations to Simon and Kai on these wonderful pieces.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## ONLINE:

### *Dates to be confirmed*

- **Insights from Professionals**  
Dr Hala Phipps - Research CMC  
Ms. Donna Size - A/CMC Lactation and Infant Feeding
- **Insights from Professionals**  
Professor Kate White - Cancer Nursing Research Unit  
Ms. Mary Lordan - CNC Neurosurgery
- **Quality Improvement Data Systems (QIDS)**  
Ms. Jennifer Graham - Clinical Audit and ims+ Manager  
Ms. Wendy Tilden - Falls Prevention & Management Coordinator
- **Falls Preventions Research**  
Ms. Wendy Tilden - Falls Prevention & Management Coordinator
- **Insight from Professionals**  
Ms. Shannon Philip - Nurse Practitioner Gynae Oncology  
Ms. Amy O'Donnell - Specialists Nurse Lung Cancer

*More programs to be announced.*

## FACE TO FACE EDUCATION:

- **RPA Gastrostomy Training Program**
  - A reminder to staff interested in learning more about the care and management of gastrostomy tubes. This program aims to provide the first steps in supporting clinicians to provide safe and effective care for patients with gastrostomy feeding tubes and devices. The training program consists of an online component and two face-to-face simulation workshops.

**Online Modules:** There are 6 modules in the online program.

**Workshop 1:** Gastrostomy Management and Care – 1-day workshop.  
Dates for 2022 - 8th November.

**Workshop 2:** Gastrostomy Removal and Replacement.  
Dates for 2022 to be confirmed.

To gain access to online modules and for any queries please email [here](#)

## IAS Perioperative Nursing Training Program

Rosa Fung, the IAS Facility Coordinator continues to lead the IAS Perioperative Nursing Training Program in

collaboration with JL Theatres. 10 sessions were held between June and August with 103 attendees. Topics included simulation training, sutures & suturing, upper GI teaching, endovascular and neurosurgical skills training.

### **SLHD Perioperative (New graduate) Nursing Training Program**

Rosa also continues with the SLHD Perioperative (New graduate) Nursing Training Program with 3 sessions held in August. This exciting program sees IAS and CEWD collaborate to deliver surgical education with a strong focus on advanced and complex procedures.

## **RECENT + ONGOING TRAINING**

### **IAS Supporting Allied Health Research**

The IAS started an Allied Health Research Skills and Mentoring program, run by A/Prof Sharon Carey, our Director of Allied Health Research and Education. The program aims to support Allied Health staff that have little or no experience in research to undertake a research project. This is a 10 month program which covers the key aspects of research from developing a protocol through to writing up study results, publications and individual mentoring. We are thrilled to have a range of Allied Health professionals participating in this program, with great ideas ranging across different clinical areas. We look forward to sharing some of this research in future IAS newsletters.

### **The RPA Gastrostomy Training Program**

The IAS Gastrostomy Training Program is a statewide Gastrostomy training program supported by the ACI. Sadly the workshops have been on hold over the past couple of years, but have recommenced in 2022. Workshops ran in May and July with fully booked out sessions. Last year the program expanded in collaboration with NSW Ambulance through tailored workshops for all Advanced Care Paramedics in training. This was designed to ensure paramedics are skilled and trained in managing gastrostomy complications in the community. The program also continues to run regionally with workshops in Dubbo and Wagga Wagga.

### **Surgical Skills Education**

Surgical skills face-to-face sessions started on the 15 February 2022.

A full program of Surgical Skills teaching is planned for this year and has recommenced following the school holiday period in July.

For more information please contact us [here](#).



# RESOURCES

## FUNDAMENTALS OF SURGERY

A reminder that for access to the 'Fundamentals of Surgery' online program please email [Sarah Whereat](mailto:Sarah.Whereat@rpa.edu.au).



# SURGICAL RESEARCH

## PUBLISHED ARTICLES, CHAPTERS, ABSTRACTS & PRESENTATIONS

Recently published articles from RPA Surgeons and Departments.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED  
ARTICLES

*RPA Institute of Academic Surgery is part of the Sydney Local Health District and works in partnership with the University of Sydney.*



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