

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Committee

## By-law

**BY-LAW PURSUANT TO THE CONSITUTION OF  
THE ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND  
OPERATION OF BOARD COMMITTEES**

<b>Area of College</b>	Policy and Advocacy
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<b>References/Legislation</b>	<i>Corporations Act 2001</i> (Cth)
<b>Associated RACP Documents</b>	Governance of College Body By-law, Appointments to College Bodies Policy, RACP Constitution
<b>Applicability</b>	Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand

*Note: This is a controlled document within the [RACP Policy Framework](#). The Framework covers all RACP policies, procedures, by-laws, terms of reference, guidelines, forms and so forth. Any new documents or amendments of existing documents or changes to approver, owner or area of college should be done in accordance with the RACP Policy Framework and Document Control (RACP Policy Framework) Procedure.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Board of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians has established the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Committee (the “Committee”). The Governance of College Bodies By-law sets out the general provisions for governance of Board Committees. Both the Governance of College Bodies By-law and this By-law govern the Committee.

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Committee is to strengthen the College’s capacity to develop a coordinated College approach to improving the health and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia.

## 3. FUNCTIONS

The functions of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Committee include:

- a) provide advice to the Board on matters relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and social policy and advocacy;
- b) provide advice to the Board on matters relating to workforce development and education and training;
- c) represent the College on Government, professional and community groups and other forums related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health
- d) facilitate the development and maintenance of partnerships, relationships and linkages with key stakeholders;
- e) lead, advise and support the development of policies and positions that address matters concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health;
- f) to adhere to the positions underpinning this By-law as follows:
  - i. acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as first peoples and the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ rights as Indigenous people;  
  
The College supports the Constitutional recognition of Australia’s first peoples and recognises the health benefits of genuine reconciliation;
  - ii. acknowledgement of the value and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait leadership to the Australian health system;
  - iii. the importance of human rights for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ advancement;
  - iv. the recognition and honouring of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worldviews in relation to health and wellbeing;
  - v. the necessity for partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and

- vi. the ongoing support to help close the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous life-expectancy and health outcomes.

## 4. COMMITTEE PROHIBITIONS

The Committee must not:

- Enter into any agreement binding upon it or on the College; or
- Represent or imply in any way that the Committee is a body independent of the College.

## 5. MEMBER COMPOSITION

The Membership of the Committee shall comprise up to 15 members, comprising:

### 5.1. Ex-officio Members

- The Chair of the College Policy and Advocacy Council

### 5.2. Appointed Members

At least ten (10) appointed members including:

- Fellows of the College
- Honorary Fellows of the College
- College trainee representatives
- Ex-officio member

### 5.3. Independent Community Members

Up to five (5) independent community members comprising:

- One (1) representative of the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association nominated by that organisation
- One (1) representative of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation nominated by that organisation
- One (1) male Aboriginal community member
- One (1) female Aboriginal community member
- At least one (1) Torres Strait Islander community member

From the Committee membership there shall be:

- At least 50% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation

## 6. MEETING

This section is to be read in conjunction with the Governance of College Bodies By-law.

## 6.1. Number of Meetings

The College Body shall hold a minimum of five (5) meetings per calendar year and shall meet by teleconference, face to face or videoconference.

## 6.2. Chair

The Chair or their appointee will Chair all meetings.

- On the recommendation of the Committee, in accordance with the Constitution, the Board will appoint one (1) of the members of the Committee as Chair
- The Chair of the Committee must be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person
- The Committee may appoint one (1) member of the Committee as Deputy Chair
- The Chair and Deputy Chair are preferably members of the College

## 6.3. Quorum

A quorum is one half of the total College Body membership.

## 6.4. Voting

Decisions will be made by consensus of the majority of members.

## 6.5. Minutes

The proceedings of all meetings of the Committee shall be recorded in the minutes.

## 6.6. Secretariat

Meeting agenda, supporting papers and minutes or outcomes will be provided prior to the date of the meeting.

## 6.7. Committee/Council Reviews

The Committee/Council are to undertake a skill and experience review annually.

The Committee/Council are to review their performance against this By-law every two years.

## 7. REPORTING

The Committee must report and make recommendations to the Board as required.

The Committee is required to provide to the Board each year:

- a new or updated Work Plan (Work Plans may be one or two years)
- a report against the preceding years' Work Plan.

## 8. REVIEW OF BY-LAW

This By-law will be reviewed every three years.

## 9. DEFINITIONS

Term	Means
Board	The Board of Directors of The Royal Australasian College of Physicians
College	The Royal Australasian College of Physicians, an incorporated body limited by guarantee ACN 000 039 047.
College Body	Has the same meaning as in the College Constitution
Ex-officio	Has the same meaning as the Governance of College Bodies By-law
Fellow	Has the same meaning as the Governance of College Bodies By-law
Member	Has the same meaning as the Governance of College Bodies By-law
Parent Body	Has the same meaning as the Governance of College Bodies By-law
Trainee	Has the same meaning as in the College Constitution.

## 10. HISTORY

Commencement		
This By-law was approved by the College Policy and Advocacy Council and commenced on 10.10.2016		
Revision	Effective Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	10.10.2016	Initial approval/New Document – Initially a TOR approved by the College Policy and Advocacy Council
2.0	04.05.2020	Updated to reflect reporting line to the RACP Board rather than the College Policy and Advocacy Council
3.0	15.09.2023	Updated to increase total membership from 12 – 15 and College membership from ‘at least six (6)’ to ‘at least eight (8)’
4.0	22.03.2024	CI 5.2 - Amend the appointment from eight (8) to ten (10). Amendment to wording to enable more than one trainee representative to be appointed, and clarity provided that other appointed members are Fellows. Amendment to clause 5.3 to increase community membership from four (4) to five (5) and include ‘at least one (1) Torres Strait Islander person’. This change will align with the increase of total membership to 15 that was approved on 15.09.2023.