

## REVIEW OF INQUIRY INTO COMPLAINTS HANDLING IN NSW HEALTH

**Organisation:** Royal Australasian College of Surgeons  
**Name:** Mr Philip G Truskett  
**Position:** Chairman  
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**Date Received:** 6/07/2006

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**Subject:**

**Summary**

# ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS



PATRON: H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES

5 July 2006

The Hon Patricia Forsythe MLC  
Committee Chair  
NSW Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister

**Re Review of Inquiry into Complaints Handling in NSW Health**

Further to our President, Dr. Russel Stitz' letter of 29 June 2006, I now attach a submission to your Review.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip G. Truskett'.

Philip G. Truskett  
Chairman

Cc: Prof Stephen Deane, College Vice President  
Dr. David Hillis, CEO



## **Submission to General Purpose Standing Committee No 2 Inquiry Into the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Report of the Committee into “Complaints Handling within NSW Health”**

19 Recommendations were made.

The Royal College of Surgeons (RACS) governs the teaching & accreditation of specialist surgeons in Australia with the aim to provide the highest standards of health care to the community.

The RACS supports the principles of open disclosure standards and good communication between all health care professionals and their patients in order to achieve and maintain the highest standards possible.

### **Response re Recommendation 2 and 3**

The RACS support the inclusion of open disclosure standards as part of the training programs and registration processes of health care professionals

Open disclosure standards should be applied to all levels of health care – clinical, administration and departmental.

### **Response re Recommendation 4, 5, 6, 7 and 13**

The RACS supports the evaluation of complaint handling programs quality improvement programs in general. It supports the inclusion of these evaluation processes into the ACHS and into the training of all health care managers.

### **Response re Recommendation 8**

The RACS supports all efforts to improve performance and evaluation including the proposal for the Clinical Excellence Commission to undertake an extensive problem education campaign to inform the community regarding the nature and extent of adverse events, complaints processes and the realistic expectations of health care within NSW.

### **Response re Recommendation 9**

The RACS supports the principles and processes of open disclosure standards in general and publication of appropriate data in annual reports.

**Response re Recommendation 1, 10, 11, 12**

The RACS supports all efforts to reduce adverse events and all efforts to improve the ACHS systems and processes to make these useful, practical and effective.

**Response re Recommendation 14**

The RACS supports all efforts to investigate adverse events with root cause analyses and disclosure of reports.

**Response re Recommendation 15**

The RACS supports a feasibility study into appropriate mandatory reporting of clinical incidents to Health Care Managers and the Department of Health in order to protect patients and to support and train health care professionals.

**Response re Recommendation 16**

The RACS supports & promotes regular clinical team review meeting, morbidity and mortality review meetings, clinical team & audits in order to improve and maintain high standards of health care.

**Response re Recommendation 17**

The RACS supports the assessment and appropriate disclosure of all valid complaints regarding adverse events, inadequate performance, inadequate staffing and training levels and inadequate facilities.

**No comment on Recommendation 18**

**Response re Recommendation 19**

The RACS supports the principle of a single independent statutory body to investigate complaints regarding both system failures as well as complaints regarding individual health care professionals.

As such the Royal Australian College of Surgeons support the HCCC.

Joseph Lizzio  
NSW State Committee