



**RACP**  
Specialists. Together  
EDUCATE ADVOCATE INNOVATE

**The Royal Australasian College of  
Physicians' submission to the New  
Zealand Medical Association**

**Code of Ethics Review**  
January 2020

## Introduction

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) welcomes the opportunity to submit feedback to the New Zealand Medical Association (NZMA) on the third stage of their Code of Ethics review.

The RACP works across more than 40 medical specialties to educate, innovate and advocate for excellence in health and medical care. Working with our senior members, the RACP trains the next generation of specialists, while playing a lead role in developing world best practice models of care. We also draw on the skills of our members, to develop policies that promote a healthier society. By working together, our members advance the interest of our profession, our patients and the broader community.

## Comments on Changes to the Code

The RACP is supportive overall of the changes proposed in this third round of consultation on the NZMA Code of Ethics. Generally, they provide clarification and improve the readability of the Code, while also bringing it better into line with other documents in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Despite the positive nature of changes to the Code, the RACP has identified some areas for improvement.

- References to culturally sensitive and culturally competent care should be replaced with reference to culturally safe care, as this is the standard that has been outlined in documents such as the Medical Council of New Zealand's Statement on Cultural Safety<sup>1</sup>
- While the replacement of reference to the Treaty of Waitangi with Te Tiriti o Waitangi is welcome, this could be further expanded upon, due to the key role it plays in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Reference in the 'Responsibilities to the Patient' section to relationships between doctors and their students falling into this category should be replaced, as students are not patients of their supervisors.
- The professional responsibilities section could be improved by the addition of a sentence that simply reads 'harassment or bullying of colleagues (including trainees, junior doctors and students) is never acceptable'.

These changes would improve the Code, and ready it for final publication.

## Conclusion

The RACP thanks the New Zealand Medical Association for the opportunity to provide feedback on the third stage of their Code of Ethics review. To discuss this submission further, please contact the Aotearoa NZ Policy and Advocacy Unit at [policy@racp.org.nz](mailto:policy@racp.org.nz).

Nāku noa, nā



Dr George Laking  
Aotearoa New Zealand President-elect  
**The Royal Australasian College of Physicians**

---

<sup>1</sup> Medical Council of New Zealand. Statement on Cultural Safety. [Internet]. 2019. Available from: <https://www.mcnz.org.nz/assets/standards/b71d139dca/Statement-on-cultural-safety.pdf>. Accessed 23 January 2020