

Media Release

The RACP welcomes additional funding for health

26 May 2016

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) has welcomed the New Zealand Government's additional \$2.2 billion in health funding, announced as part of this afternoon's Budget.

The RACP New Zealand President Dr Jonathan Christiansen said it was pleasing that the Minister of Finance, the Hon. Bill English, has identified health as an area of priority for the government.

Dr Christiansen said a highlight of the Budget was funding for the 2017 rollout of a national bowel cancer screening programme.

"It is pleasing that the Government has a long term view for this initiative with a staged implementation planned for the rest of New Zealand. The RACP is educating high quality specialists, including gastroenterologists who will form a significant part of the clinical workforce.

"The \$36 million for warmer, drier and healthier homes is a positive step towards early intervention and improving the health of vulnerable children. Unhealthy homes increase the risk of children developing respiratory illnesses including bronchiectasis and serious conditions like rheumatic fever."

He also applauded the increase in tobacco taxes – an annual 10 per cent increase for the next four years.

"The RACP endorses all initiatives that support New Zealand reaching its Smokefree goal by 2025.

"But we are also mindful that we can't rely solely on changes to taxation alone. New Zealand also needs further and more innovative initiatives to help combat smoking rates, particularly among Māori."

Ends

Media contact: Lisa Docherty ph: 0274 053 080 lisa.Docherty@racp.org.nz

Follow the RACP on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/TheRACP>

About The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP): The RACP trains, educates and advocates on behalf of more than 15,000 physicians and 7,500 trainee physicians across Australia and New Zealand.

The College represents a broad range of medical specialties including general medicine, paediatrics and child health, cardiology, respiratory medicine, neurology, oncology, public health medicine, occupational and environmental medicine, palliative medicine, sexual health medicine, rehabilitation medicine, geriatric medicine and addiction medicine. Beyond the drive for medical excellence, the RACP is committed to developing health and social policies which bring vital improvements to the wellbeing of patients.

The College offers 60 training pathways. These lead to the award of one of seven qualifications that align with 45 specialist titles recognised by the Medical Board of Australia or allow for registration in nine vocational scopes with the Medical Council of New Zealand.