

## Media Release

### RACP highlights link between health equity and reconciliation

3 June 2016

As National Reconciliation Week draws to a close today, the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) has highlighted the importance of health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia's journey towards reconciliation.

Each year, from May 27 to June 3, National Reconciliation Week seeks to celebrate and build on the relationships shared by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and other Australians.

RACP President Dr Catherine Yelland said substantial and sustained action is needed to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have access to healthcare and the same health outcomes enjoyed by non-Indigenous Australians.

"Reconciliation Week is an ideal time to recognise the trauma suffered by Australia's first people," explained Dr Yelland. "It is important to acknowledge the past and undertake a process of reconciliation to enable us all to move forward towards a better future for all Australians."

Dr Yelland called for the government to better recognise the vital role played by Indigenous health leaders and the Aboriginal community controlled health sector in ensuring access to appropriate health services, and to commit secure, long-term funding to build their capacity.

Dr Yelland added more needs to be done to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

"While we have seen increased access to medicines and health checks, as well as improvements in child health outcomes, we are yet to see any real progress in improving life expectancies.

"The RACP is committed to continuing our work in partnership with Indigenous health stakeholders to bring about a better future."

**Ends**

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**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.