



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians

Media Release

RACP calls for better care for high-risk patients on Nauru

18 May 2016

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) is calling for better care of high-risk patients in offshore detention centres, following an emergency caesarean in Nauru on Thursday.

The Somali woman and her newborn baby were medically evacuated from Nauru to a Brisbane intensive care unit, after she underwent a caesarean section a month prematurely.

RACP President Dr Catherine Yelland said that high-risk pregnancies can be identified and that these women should then be transferred to the Australian mainland for delivery and post partum care.

“The College called on the Australian Government in November 2015 to listen to paediatricians and immediately transfer a high-risk pregnant woman with a complicated pregnancy from Nauru to Australia.

“Any mother likely to deliver a baby needing more than the most basic level of care must be transferred to Australia.

“This most recent emergency medical evacuation again raises questions about the standard of health care provided to refugees and asylum seekers in offshore facilities,” Dr Yelland said.

“Offshore detention centres cannot provide quality health care. Their remoteness precludes the provision of timely and appropriate specialist care.

“Decisions regarding the treatment and welfare of patients need to be in the hands of clinicians, not bureaucrats.

“The health and wellbeing of pregnant women should never be open to compromise,” she said.

The RACP released its [Policy and Position Statement on Refugee and Asylum Seeker Health](#) in May 2015.

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.