



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians

Media Release

RACP divesting from fossil fuels

10 June 2015

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) will divest its interests in fossil fuel industries due to health impacts of climate change.

Speaking recently at the RACP Annual General Meeting, President, Laureate Professor Nicholas Talley said the Board had directed its Finance Committee to divest approximately \$2.3 million of its investments.

Professor Talley said that this sent a clear message of the College's commitment to public health outcomes.

"Physicians respect science, including climate change science, and it would not be right for the College to continue to invest in industries with a direct stake in fossil fuels," Professor Talley said.

"The health impacts of climate change include the likely increase of heat-related illnesses and deaths, respiratory illnesses, infectious diseases, and the general health impacts of extreme weather events.

"Climate change exacerbates existing global inequalities, with the world's poorest being the most impacted."

The World Health Organisation estimated that between 2030 and 2050, 250,000 people will die each year from the impact of climate change.

"Our responsibility as physicians is not just to Australia and New Zealand, but to the broader global community who will suffer through a failure to take decisive action for the future," Professor Talley said.

On 24 June the RACP is hosting the Australia and New Zealand launch of the Lancet Commission's Report on Climate Change and Health.

Ends

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About The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP): The RACP trains, educates and advocates on behalf of more than 14,950 physicians – often referred to as medical specialists – and 6,530 Trainee members across Australia and New Zealand. The College represents more than 34 medical specialties including paediatrics & child health, cardiology, respiratory medicine, neurology, oncology and public health medicine, occupational & environmental medicine, palliative medicine, sexual health medicine, rehabilitation 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. www.racp.edu.au