



Guidelines for adherence to the RACP Media & External Communications Policy

For Fellows and trainees

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Guidelines for adherence to the RACP Media & External Communications Policy

1. Background

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP / the College) launched the Media & External Communications Policy (Media Policy) in October 2012.

The Media Policy describes the protocols all College Fellows, trainees, non-Fellow directors and employees are advised to follow when representing the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP).

The Media Policy covers how the College responds to media enquiries and issues; the type of media issues the College comments on and the designated spokesperson for the College. The Media Policy also outlines the process for responding to media enquiries and other protocols to be adopted when undertaking external communication activities.

The purpose of this Media Policy is to ensure that the College presents a unified, informed and consistent response to the wide range of health and medical issues with which the College is involved across Australia and New Zealand.

It is an underlying principle of the Media Policy that in all instances, a Fellow or trainee is to be the designated spokesperson representing the College to the media, except in exceptional circumstances such as a crisis or where College operations are questioned; in which case the RACP CEO, or New Zealand delegate may be best placed to comment. Spokespersons and the scope of the topic of comment must be approved by the college as per the Media Policy.



2. Purpose

This document outlines the protocol that is to be followed, where a breakdown or failure to adhere to the RACP Media Policy has been brought to the attention of the College.

3. Definitions

3.1 RACP-appointed spokesperson or College representative

1. The College President (or New Zealand equivalent where relevant); the College President-Elect; DFAC Presidents and Presidents-Elect and RACP Board Members;
2. Specific Fellows who are subject matter experts in their chosen field; and/or
3. Specific Fellows or employees identified and approved from time to time.

3.2 Media

Media refers to contributions to print/ radio/TV such as interviews and commentary, media statements, letters and editorials.

Any external engagements, such as speeches or presentations, which may involve discussions relating to the College's policy, position or publications; or in which a Fellow or employee of the College seeks to represent the College publicly, is also defined as 'media' for the sake of the Media Policy and the Protocol for managing a breach of the Media Policy.

3.3 Breach of the RACP Media Policy

A breach of the Media Policy refers a circumstance involving a Fellow, trainee or College employee, where the requirements of the RACP Media Policy are not upheld. Examples of a breach include, but are not limited to, providing commentary to journalist about a College policy, on behalf of the College, without seeking the necessary permissions to do so, or leaking confidential RACP information to media contacts.

4. Process

The process for managing a breakdown or failure to adhere to the RACP Media Policy is outlined below:



1. In the event of a reported breakdown or failure to adhere to the RACP Media Policy, the matter will be reviewed against the RACP Media Policy to confirm that a breakdown or failure to adhere has occurred.
2. The RACP Fellow or trainee who has been involved in the reported breach will be contacted by the RACP President or delegated authority, i.e. President-Elect, to discuss.
3. The circumstances of the reported breakdown or failure to adhere to the RACP Media Policy will be considered by the President or delegated authority. During this phase, discussion should take place regarding the parameters and circumstances surrounding the failure to adhere to the policy, recognising the failure to adhere may have been unintentional.
4. Pending the outcomes of the discussions, the behaviours and actions associated with the failure to adhere, the matter will be assessed in accordance with the RACP Code of Conduct.
5. A reported breach of the Code of Conduct may be lodged with the RACP Standards Committee.
6. Following a review by the RACP Standards Committee, a recommendation on the matter may be made to the RACP Board.

ENDS

APPROACHED BY MEDIA

Media Process for RACP Fellows and trainees

Media call received

Determine best approach with assistance from RACP Communications Unit

Media enquiry resolved

If you receive an enquiry in your capacity as an RACP member from the media:

Take down key information including **contact name and details, media outlet, nature of enquiry, and deadline.**

If you wish to comment, **contact the relevant RACP Communications Unit:**

• **Australia:** Communications Unit
Ph. +61 408 639 697

Email.
communications@racp.edu.au

• **New Zealand:**

Ph. +64 4 460 8122

Email. simone.evans@racp.org.nz

In consultation with key stakeholders including Fellowship Relations and Policy & Advocacy, the RACP Communications Unit will assess the opportunity taking into consideration:

- Any current or planned College Policies relating to the topic.

- Previous public comments from the College on the matter or related issues.

- If the issue is aligned with the College's strategic directions/of interest to the organisation.

- Timing.

- The need for consultation with RACP Board Directors, Fellows, elected officials, and external stakeholders.

The RACP Communications Unit can support your media engagement in your capacity as an RACP member:

The RACP Communications Unit liaises with all internal and external stakeholders including Specialty Societies.

The Unit can advise you on matters including the best approach, the parameters outlined in the RACP Media & External Communications Policy, and determining the next steps for future media engagement opportunities.

*The RACP has Communications Staff in Australia and New Zealand, and a 24/7 media team based in Sydney.



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians

APPROACHED BY MEDIA

Media Process for RACP employees

RACP employee receives enquiry from media

Employee contacts the RACP Communications Unit

Media enquiry resolved

If you receive an enquiry in your capacity as an RACP employee:

Take down key information including **contact name and details, media outlet, nature of enquiry, and deadline.**

It is important that you do not comment or provide information to the journalist or media outlet.

Contact the RACP Communications Unit who will assess the potential opportunity:

- **Australia: Communications Unit**
Ph. +61 408 639 697
Email. communications@racp.edu.au
- **New Zealand:**
Ph. +64 4 460 8122
Email. simone.evans@racp.org.nz

The Unit will work closely with the appropriate internal and external key stakeholders to determine the best approach.

The RACP Communications Unit will follow up with the journalist and facilitate the media enquiry:

The RACP Communications Unit is responsible for managing media enquiries and can determine the appropriate approach within the parameters outlined in the RACP Media & External Communications Policy. The Unit will facilitate the next steps.